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ABSTRACT

A discussion of the nature and scope of basic skills training introduces a series of recommendations for the improved effectiveness of this training based on a survey of California community colleges. The first sections of this report discuss issues of community college responsibility for basic skills training, its priority as an institutional goal, credit, staff development, program evaluation, and requirements for demonstration of basic skills competency. The next four sections focus on computation, speech and listening, reading, and writing skills. Each section provides an introduction and philosophical rationale, survey results, observations and recommendations, and a list of references. Recommendations were developed in areas of personnel requirements and qualifications, goal determination, course offerings, placement and testing, proficiency levels, instructional approaches, evaluation, funding, and credit. The report ends with a summary of conclusions and recommendations, a discussion of legal and funding problems, and an overview of identification, assessment, instruction, reinforcement, and follow-up activities in basic skills training. A glossary, a list of exemplary writing programs, and sample survey instruments are appended. (Author/JP)

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ED178121

BASIC SKILLS STUDY REPORT

Agenda Item 4

A Report to the Chancellor of California
Community Colleges

From

The Chancellor's Advisory Committee on
Basic Skills

Prepared for a Meeting of
Board of Governors of the
California Community Colleges
October 26, 1979
Sacramento, California

JC 790 571

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October 1979

Board of Governors of the
California Community Colleges
October 26, 1979

Item 4

Title: Basic Skills Study Report

Staff Presentation: Clarence Mangham, Administrator
Innovative Programs

Summary

1. In 1977 an advisory committee was appointed to assist in reviewing basic skills training in the community colleges and to consider what might be done to improve effectiveness of the training.

2. This item represents the first of a two-part report from the committee and consists of an overview which led to conclusions and recommendations regarding six major issues. In addition, the committee provides conclusions and recommendations in the four areas of computation, speech and listening, reading and writing.

3. Part two of the report is scheduled for submission to the Chancellor in Spring, 1980.

Recommended Action

It is recommended that the Board of Governors:

1. Receive the report with appreciation to members of the committee.

2. Direct the Chancellor and staff to review and comment on the report and to prepare recommendations based upon the report.

PREFACE

The information appearing in this document constitutes Part I of a two-part report which the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Basic Skills is submitting to the Chancellor of California Community Colleges. This first report provides an overview of what is presently taking place in basic skills instruction in the public community colleges within California and also makes a series of recommendations as to what might be done to enhance this instruction.

Part II, which is expected to be submitted to the Chancellor during the spring of 1980, will provide an in-depth analysis of the survey data which have already been compiled by the Committee on basic skills programs in California community colleges. That report will delve into such areas as (1) the relationship between district size and type (urban, suburban, rural) and the kinds of basic skills offerings which are available, (2) the relationship between students served in each program and the number of para-professionals working in the programs, (3) the relationship between the type of instructional approach used and the type of skill being taught, and (4) the relationship between the grading procedure used and the type of institution in which the skills are being taught.

The results of the above studies as well as other relationship-type investigations which will be carried out during the second phase of the Committee's activities should be of particular interest to program planners and instructors of basic skills offerings.

The Advisory Committee on Basic Skills appreciates the cooperation it has received from community college districts throughout the state in supplying the requested information reflected in this report. It sincerely hopes that this report will prove useful to them during their deliberations on what ought to be the future of basic skills instruction in their districts.

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INTRODUCTION

From time to time the general public has expressed its concern over what it perceives to be a decline in the basic communication and computational skills of a large segment of our population. This concern resurfaced in the mid-1970's with the media charging that students as well as those no longer enrolled in educational institutions could not function adequately in our complex society. In its cover story, "Why Johnny Can't Write" (December, 1975), Newsweek pointed an accusatory finger at the high schools and colleges for graduating students who could neither read nor write at minimal levels. It observed that "...the U. S. educational system is spawning a generation of semiliterates" and supported its assertion with various statistics and the views of numerous well-known educators. This position taken by Newsweek and other media sources received additional support from the results of a Health, Education and Welfare financed study which appeared about the same time as the various media presentations on this subject. This four-year, one million dollar study of "Adult Functional Competency" reported that over 23 million Americans - one of every five adults - cannot read, write or compute well enough to function effectively in today's world. (Northcutt, 1975)

The picture in California did not appear to be significantly different from the national scene at that time. University of California Vice President Swain observed in 1976 that "More than 50% of the entering freshmen at the University of California . . . require basic education in English Composition, and many lack mathematical skills as well." (Swain, 1976) Equally disturbing statistics were being used by observers of the high school and community college scene in describing the number of students needing basic skills training.

Demand for Instruction in Basic Skills

After learning of this state of affairs in California and throughout the nation, many parents and irate citizens demanded that our schools and colleges get "back to basics." They insisted that emphasis must again be placed on providing instruction in basic communication and computational skills.

In response to this insistence by a large segment of the citizenry that greater emphasis be placed on basic communication and computational skills, schools and colleges reviewed their curricula and support services to determine what could be done to improve the quality of instruction in the basic skills areas. Many institutions expanded their basic skills programs and accompanied this expansion with tougher academic standards which eventually culminated in the establishment of competency testing programs for numerous high schools and evidence of proficiency requirements in large numbers of colleges.

The impact on community colleges of this increased demand for more emphasis on basic skills has been significant. Even before the current pressure to improve the quality of instruction in the basic skills areas, community colleges were addressing the needs of a wide range of students from very diversified backgrounds. As a result of the "open door" policy adhered to by many community colleges, these institutions found themselves serving not only the so-called traditional student, but also such populations as the culturally and educationally deprived, returning men and women, physically handicapped, and senior citizens. Many individuals falling within these classifications had such manifest problems as low standardized test scores in basic communication and computational skills, inconsistent previous academic performance, poor self-concept, limited sophistication regarding the purpose and programs of community colleges and a neutral or hostile attitude to learning despite their having made the effort to enroll in college. Nevertheless, most community colleges accepted the responsibility for assisting these persons in improving the quality of their lives through their educational achievements and positive attitudinal changes regarding their own worth and society in general.

The enrollment in community colleges of those who have been referred to as high risk students (Moore, 1970) and as the new or nontraditional students (Cross, 1977) has increased considerably during the last decade. Correspondingly, community colleges have accepted the job of working with these students as an appropriate activity and have expended substantial resources to carry out this responsibility effectively.

Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Basic Skills

As community colleges have continued to provide training in basic skills, two major questions have arisen:

(1) What is the nature and scope of the basic skills training which community colleges are providing?

(2) What can be done to enhance the effectiveness of the training?

To assist the Chancellor's Office in addressing these questions, an Advisory Committee on Basic Skills was established. The Committee was composed of nineteen persons: two students, two board of trustees members, two superintendents, two deans of instruction, one vice president for student affairs, one EOPS director and nine instructors representing the four basic skills areas of computation, speech/listening, reading and writing. (The list of committee members appears in the appendix.)

The Advisory Committee met for the first time in October, 1977, and agreed to survey the field by using a questionnaire and then divided into four subcommittees to write the questionnaires. The four subgroups were reading, writing, computation skills, and speech/listening. Each of the survey forms included a working definition of the discipline being surveyed. In addition, the Advisory Committee agreed that each of the

four subjects would include similar and, in some cases the same, questions on the survey form. It was also the aim of the Advisory Committee to keep the questionnaires as brief as possible while asking detailed information about the college's program. (Samples of the questionnaires are included in the appendix.)

The Advisory Committee adopted a general working definition of the term "basic skills" for use in its work: those fundamental or essential academic skills which are necessary to function in today's complex world and which are also necessary for student success in academic and/or occupational programs in the community college. The questionnaires were sent to the California community colleges in the early spring of 1978, asking for data based on fall, 1977 programs. The return rate was over 90% and with the information of the survey at hand, the sub-committees analyzed the reports and worked on position papers. During the 1978-79 academic year the reports from each discipline have been read, critiqued by the full Committee and rewritten several times to reflect accurately the general position of the full Committee on each of the basic skills areas being considered.

During the Committee's deliberations, it has considered six major issues which are being broadly discussed at the present time.

(1) Do community colleges have a responsibility to offer basic skills instruction?

(2) What priority should the teaching of basic skills be given?

(3) Should credit be given for basic skills courses?

(4) Are present staff development programs in California community colleges adequate to provide community college instructors with the techniques and knowledge necessary for them to become even more effective in their basic skills instruction?

(5) Is appropriate evaluation of basic skills programs taking place?

(6) Should students receiving Associate degrees and Certificates of Completion be required to demonstrate proficiency in basic skills?

A summary discussion on each of these issues is presented in the following section. The remaining sections of this report provide presentation on each of the four basic skills areas as well as general conclusions and recommendations.

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1. Cross, K. Patricia. Accent on Learning: Improving Instruction and Reshaping the Curriculum. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1977.

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5. Swain, Donald. "Opening Remarks." Proceedings of a Joint UC/CSUC Conference on Entering Freshmen: Their Specific Education, December 3-5, 1976, UC Arrowhead Conference Center, 19-24.

6. "Why Johnny Can't Write." Newsweek, December 8, 1975, 58-65.

DISCUSSION OF MAJOR ISSUES

As the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Basic Skills discussed and investigated the scope and operation of basic skills programs in California community colleges, six significant issues emerged. These issues which were presented in the Introduction section are discussed briefly here.

I. Do community colleges have a responsibility to offer basic skills instruction?

Underlying much of the Committee's work has been an assumption that basic skills is a necessary and important part of community college offerings. Nevertheless, in this era of financial limitations, controversy surrounds the question, "Do community colleges have a responsibility to offer basic skills instruction?" The Committee felt that it should deal with the issue directly. In addressing this question, the Advisory Committee considered a variety of sources: California Education Code, California Administrative Code, adopted statements of philosophy of the Board of Governors, and a large body of literature, including appropriate research on basic skills programs in high schools and colleges. Following is a summary of that review.

A. The course of study for community colleges as provided by state legislation is quite broad and, in the judgment of the Committee, includes what has come to be deemed "basic skills instruction". Section 78201 of the California Education Code states:

> The course of study for two-year community colleges shall be designed to fit the needs of students of the 13th and 14th grades and may include courses of instruction designed to prepare for admission to the upper division of higher institutions of learning and such other courses of instruction designed to prepare persons for agriculture, commercial, homemaking, industrial and other vocations, and such courses of instruction as may be deemed necessary to provide for the civic and liberal education of the citizens of the community.

B. In consonance with the above legislation, Section 51101 of the California Administrative Code, Title 5, simply states, "Each community college shall establish such programs of education and courses as will permit the realization of the objectives and functions of the community college."

C. The Board of Governors, in several position statements, has affirmed its support of basic skills instruction. For example, in its Five-Year Plan, adopted in January 1977, the Board lists "developmental education" as one of the five areas in which community colleges should have curriculum offerings. In that connection the plan states, "community colleges have long recognized their responsibility to offer basic developmental or remedial programs."

D. Scholars such as Cross (Accent on Learning, 1977), Moore (Against the Odds, 1970) and Roueche and Snow (Overcoming Learning Problems, 1977) have pointed to the tremendous need for basic skills offerings at the collegiate level. They have also noted the benefits which can accrue to students as a result of having received such instruction. (Other significant works are listed in the bibliography appearing at the end of this section.)

The fact that all of the reporting colleges (96) in the Basic Skills Survey offer basic skills courses demonstrates the need for and interest in these types of courses. Nevertheless, the financial crisis caused by the passage of Proposition 13 and the continuing cry by many for reduced government spending has raised some disturbing but perhaps necessary questions about the role of community colleges in basic skills instruction. As Duncan-Hall has reminded us, "...reduced budgets...tend to increase the debate about who should go to college, which in turn calls into question the open admissions philosophy of community colleges." (Duncan-Hall, 1978)

The Advisory Committee's position on this issue is that community colleges do have a responsibility to offer basic skills courses. The Committee feels that community colleges must continue their basic skills programs and should expand them as necessary. It further feels that:

1. For many students being able to attend college is important motivation to learn. (Even though students may, at first, have programs largely composed of basic skills courses, being in the college environment keeps their ultimate occupational and/or academic goals clearly in view.)

2. Because of the community colleges' long involvement with basic skills program they are equipped to offer significant, meaningful programs with needed support services.

3. Basic skills instruction is good public policy because (a) upgrading basic skills may enable students to get better jobs, pay more taxes, generally lead more productive lives, and be better citizens, and (b) a literate citizenry is essential in a democracy; financial aid for basic skills instruction is a good investment.

4. It is incumbent upon community colleges to provide courses which meet the needs of students eligible for admission.

II. What priority should the teaching of basic skills be given?

As a result of its deliberations on this subject as reflected in the observations presented above, the Committee feels that basic skills programs must be afforded a high priority in community college curriculum offerings. It recognizes, however, that there are those who

take an opposing position to the Committee's stance on this matter. These persons would argue that it is impractical for community colleges to be expected to give basic skills instruction a high priority when there are inadequate funds available to carry out the other mandated programs of the college. They would point out that since these mandated offerings are more in keeping with what community colleges ought to be doing, they should be given the highest priority. Going further, they would argue that courses designed for transfer purposes or for the development of actual occupational skills should be given the highest priority, and that basic skills courses should not be given very high priority since these skills should have been mastered at the elementary and secondary levels.

Despite the opposing arguments, the Committee feels strongly that basic skills instruction must be placed among the highest priorities in the institution. Correspondingly, it believes that adequate financial support from the state should be provided to enable colleges to engage in this type of instruction without its having an unduly adverse effect on other areas of the curriculum.

In a time of financial restrictions and demand for accountability, it is essential that the general public understand the importance of basic skills in the comprehensive community college. The Board of Governors has maintained a broad mission for community colleges - to provide general, transfer, occupational, developmental and community education. It is the position of the Advisory Committee on Basic Skills that basic skills provide a firm foundation for all the other areas in community college education.

III. Should credit be given for basic skills courses?

Having determined that basic skills instruction is indeed the responsibility of community colleges and that such instruction should be appropriately financed as a major part of the college's curriculum, the Committee then considered at length the issue: Should credit be given for basic skills courses? Related questions were: If credit is given, what kind of credit should it be: Associate degree? transfer? other? For those receiving Associate degree credit, should such credit be counted toward general education requirements or only be elective units?

The Advisory Committee agrees that some kind of credit for basic skills courses should be given for several reasons. First, it is morally right to provide some credit for the effort and achievement of those who successfully complete the basic skills course. Second, many researchers (Hertz and others) have observed that students are not inclined to take basic skills courses without credit; credit serves as an important motivation to learn. Third, in order to attend college at all, many students rely on a variety of state and federal aid programs, all of which are tied to the number of credit units a student is carrying. To deny credit for such courses would, in effect, eliminate from our colleges many of the very students who are now underrepresented and whose attendance Board policy is now trying to promote. If these students are not able to attend our community colleges, the "open-door" concept becomes meaningless.

The Committee recognizes that there are those in the community college segment who consider the above reasons insufficient justification for granting credit for basic skills courses. Such individuals feel that academic standards are being lowered to accommodate the psychological and financial needs of students. Although the Committee respects this opposing position, it nevertheless believes that there are sufficiently compelling reasons to warrant the granting of some credit for these offerings.

IV. Are present staff development programs in California Community Colleges adequate to provide community college instructors with the techniques and knowledge necessary for them to become even more effective in their basic skills instruction?

In its discussions, the Advisory Committee agreed that there is a definite need for more staff development programs for basic skills instructors. With increasing limitations placed on new full-time teacher hiring, it is important to enlighten our existing faculties to the needs of our new students and to the teaching strategies most appropriate to meet those needs. Most community college instructors need in-service training in order to understand, appreciate, and effectively teach the wide range of "new", "high risk", or "nontraditional" students who will attend our community colleges.

Despite the need for staff development, the surveys distributed by the Committee revealed only limited staff development programs available for either the basic skills specialist or the general faculty. Only twenty-five percent of the reporting institutions indicated that they have an inservice training budget for reading, and only seven percent indicated that they had inservice training budgets for writing, speech, and mathematics.

All of the reporting institutions indicated that faculty members are encouraged to attend conferences to enable them to identify and help students weak in basic skills, but there is inadequate evidence that reading conferences include sufficient sessions on how to teach students to read mathematics problems or that mathematics conferences include workshops related to the development of students' reading, writing, and speech skills. The Advisory Committee is especially concerned in this area because research has shown that the coordination of subject areas in basic skills instruction enhances the effectiveness of that instruction.

V. Is appropriate evaluation of basic skills programs taking place?

The Committee recognizes that without formal follow-up and program evaluation, serious questions can be raised about the appropriateness of committing institutional resources to any type of instruction. This is particularly true in the area of basic skills because of the controversy surrounding this form of instruction at the collegiate level. The surveys in all four basic skills areas show that certain evaluation of these programs is taking place. More, however, can be done in this regard.

Apparently, most institutions rely almost completely on student and teacher evaluations of the basic skills offerings to determine program effectiveness. Although these forms of evaluation are very important, they are not sufficient to provide an objective and accurate assessment of the impact of these offerings on the lives of those undergoing the training experience.

One important means of determining program effectiveness is "follow-up research" on what happens to the students after they take the courses. Follow-up studies are generally very difficult to carry out, but they can yield valuable information when they are successful. Another means of assessing the impact of providing basic skills offerings is the use of outside evaluators to review the entire basic skills program. The advantage of this form of evaluation is that it is generally much more objective than evaluations carried out by persons directly involved in the instructional process.

In summary, the Committee feels that some evaluation of basic skills is taking place. However, that evaluation should be expanded to include more objective methods so that a truer indication of the effectiveness of the instruction can be ascertained.

VI. Should students receiving Associate degrees and Certificates of Completion be required to demonstrate proficiency in basic skills?

Although the Committee has given considerable attention to the topic of proficiency testing in each of the four basic skills areas, it has completed its deliberations on only two of these: writing and speech/listening. Its recommendations on computation and reading will be made to the Chancellor during the next several months and will be reflected in the second document of this two-part report.

The Committee's recommendation regarding an evidence of proficiency requirement for writing and speech/listening is that such a requirement is desirable but that the precise means of determing whether the desired proficiency level has been reached should rest with the individual community college district.

References

1. Board of Governors, California Community Colleges. Five-Year Plan: 1977-1982. Sacramento, 1977

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COMPUTATION

Introduction and Philosophy

One of the most significant challenges in contemporary education is the teaching of basic computational skills. A definition of "basic computational skills" was introduced in the survey of California community colleges, carried out in the spring of 1978 by the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Basic Skills, in order to provide a common base for responding to the various items. This section will refer to the same definition as follows:

> The ability to select and use the appropriate procedures needed for the operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division or positive whole numbers, fractions, decimal fractions, and percents. Application of these calculation skills should include the ability to make estimations and to use units of measurement, both English and Metric.

Historically, it has been assumed by the general public that students should have completed their basic skill development prior to entering any segment of postsecondary education. However, the faculties of the California community colleges long have been aware of the unrealistic nature of this assumption. Furthermore, with the increase in enrollment of students who are returning to a formal educational setting after an extended absence, it has become increasingly obvious that there exists an ever-growing need for basic skill instruction, instruction designed to develop the fundamental competencies needed for survival in our complex society. Thus, programs to meet these students' needs have been developed in California community colleges over the past few years; one of the principal purposes of the Committee's survey was to ascertain precisely the nature and scope of these programs. The survey results were based on fall, 1977 data with 88 of the 106 colleges responding (83%).

Survey Results

The first fact to emerge from this survey was that the colleges are not consistent in their approach to the initial assessment and advising of the student, to identifying the needs and current ability levels of the student at the time of his/her entrance to the college. Most colleges do employ more than one assessment/advising method. Less than one-third (25 of the 88) of the colleges reported that they require students to take a placement examination for assessment and advisement purposes. The most common methods reported for the advising and recommended placing of students in mathematics courses were: 55 colleges (63%) rely on counselor referral; 45 colleges (51%) rely on instructor referral; and, 56 colleges (64%) permit the student to make his/her own judgment.

The second fact to emerge from the survey was that the offtrings of basic mathematics skill instruction are both extensive and diverse. The extensiveness of the offerings is supported by the facts that each of the colleges offers at least one course, with two or three being more typical (174 courses among the 88 colleges); the mean number of sections per college is 10.6 (a total of 934 sections offered by the 88 colleges). The diversity of the programs is indicated by examining the various instructional formats being practiced by the 88 colleges: 47 colleges offer courses with traditional lecture/discussion formats; 42 offer self-paced instruction; 41 offer peer tutorial assistance, 28 offer a modular-type approach. Furthermore, the overlap in instructional formats indicates that many colleges offer mathematics basic skills courses in more than one instructional format, and/or many offer a combination of formats within a specific course.

Third, the survey attempted to ascertain the colleges' commitment to developing computational skills. The evidence clearly indicates there does indeed exist an extensive commitment in this area. It was reported by 85 colleges that the total number of certificated instructors assigned to basic skills courses in mathematics included 247 full-time and 282 part-time staff, with the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) instructors assigned being 133.3, a mean of 1.57. Additionally, 73 colleges (83%) reported employing paraprofessional aides (tutors, instructional aides) to assist in these courses with 48 colleges (56%) responding that the median ratio of students to aide was between eleven to twenty students to one aide. Thus, it would seem there is an obvious philosophical commitment differs. These conclusions are further borne out by the fact that only 14 colleges out of 69 (16.9%) have funds (grants, etc.) available other than state apportionment and local monies to support their programs. Furthermore, only 6 out of the 88 colleges (6.8%) have a programs. Furthermore, only 6 out of the 88 colleges (6.8Z) have a specific budget for in-service training of instructors. Indeed, there would seem to be minimum interest for in-service training of instructors with only 31 of the 85 reporting (36.5%) holding regularly scheduled staff meetings, 5 (5.9%) providing outside consultants, 6 (7.1%) using funded/ reassigned time for research, 5 (5.9%) holding training sessions, 38 (44.7%) encouraging attendance at conferences; and 27 (30.7%) providing for more than one type of in-service training.

Fourth, the colleges are approximately equally divided with respect to requiring that a computational proficiency level be demonstrated by students prior to awarding an Associate Degree. Of the 88 colleges responding, 41 (48.9%) do not require any formal assessment of the students' proficiency level, 45 (51.1%) do have a formal requirement with the vast majority of these 45 institutions, 36 (90%) stipulating either the passing of a specified test or the completion of a specified course prior to the award of the degree.

Last, the survey indicated that the evaluative procedures employed to verify the effectiveness of the basic computational programs overwhelmingly were the traditional ones of "final examinations", student evaluation of course, and teacher evaluation of courses. Only 26 of the 85 colleges (30.6%) reported that there is any follow-up of students after the completion of the course.

Observations and Recommendations

Three key concepts, traditional objectives of the California community colleges, must underlie any recommendations. These are in addition to the conclusions reached using the data received from the colleges themselves. First, a community college accepts incoming students as they are, not as they would wish them to be. Second, a primary obligation to all students is to assist them in identifying realistic educational goals. Third, the objective and the responsibility of the community college is to assist students in obtaining their goals.

Accepting students "as they are" requires that colleges should be providing each entering student with a realistic means of evaluating his/her skill level in computation. In addition to the traditional "normative" reference type of testing, colleges should consider using "criterion" referenced or mastery learning examinations in basic skills. Appropriate projects to develop such examinations may be necessary. These tests would not only be appropriate for the initial advisement of students in order to assist them in being placed in a course best suited to their goals and background, but also would be useful for skill level certification for the Associate Degree. This definitely is not intended to imply that students should be advised into courses solely on the basis of score on any type of test. Certainly, several other factors must also be considered simultaneously in the advisement process.

Advising of students based on their background is only the first step. Once the need for basic computational skills instruction has been established, the faculty must contend with the problem of how best they can assist students to achieve and to learn in the basic course. It is clear from the available literature and from the survey that no one instructional format is superior, that students learn in different ways. Thus, a variety of formats should be available for the option of the student. Also, it follows that appropriate procedures need to be developed for evaluating students' learning styles, in order to do the best possible job of matching the students' learning styles with the instructional format. The development of such procedures represents an expense. However, better matching of students' learning styles with instructional formats would result in the improved use of instructional resources, and thus be more cost effective in the long run.

The long-term success with improving students' basic computational skills may well necessitate the services of "computation specialists" paralleling the reading specialists who now are making progress toward improving reading skills. Computation instructors need to understand the special learning problems of students weak in the basic skills areas and they need to learn about the various instructional formats available. In addition, it is especially important that they understand how best to communicate with students at this level of development. Meeting this need may require the funding of projects to provide retraining and to develop such specialists.

Two fatal weaknesses exist in most basic computation skills programs currently operating in California community colleges: 1) the lack of skill reinforcement once the student has developed the skill (completed the course); and 2) the lack of evaluative student follow-up. Most of the reporting colleges indicated that "final" testing of the students was the primary method of evaluating the program. Certainly, such testing is appropriate, but simultaneously colleges should be evaluating their basic computation skills programs with some type of longer term follow-up of students in order to attempt to assess the students' retention of the skills and their continued successful application of the skills (i.e., in future course work, in occupations).

Summary

A realistic evaluation of the role of the community colleges in the development of computational skills is very difficult for two reasons. The first is the lack of a common agreement of the specific skills desired. The second, and more critical, is the lack of any long-range evaluation procedures for the effectiveness of existing, or suggested programs. Once a student has left the setting of formal instruction, follow-up is virutally non-existent. These two problems should be addressed as necessary support for the many elaborate and usually well-conceived efforts which now take place in our colleges.

In its discussions on the question of credit for computation courses, the Committee agreed that community colleges have a responsibility to students to supply the means to correct weaknesses in computational skills. Furthermore, the scope of funding for the colleges necessarily must provide adequate financing for these corrective efforts.

Historically, many mathematics courses which traditionally have been viewed by community college mathematics instructors as basic (i.e., elementary algebra and plane geometry) have been offered as credit courses. Basic computation as defined in the survey and in this paper is currently being offered by community colleges on both a credit and non-credit basis. The Committee recommends that some type of credit be awarded to students who satisfactorily complete a course in computational skills; however, the question of the specific type of credit to be assigned should be left to the needs of the community, the college, the student population, and the educational segment involved.

SPEECH AND LISTENING

Introduction and Philosophy

Traditionally, the areas of speech and listening have not received the degree of attention which they deserve in our educational institutions. Most of these institutions from elementary to collegiate levels have not stressed sufficiently the importance of courses designed to develop and enhance the speaking and listening abilities of students attending these institutions. Apparently, this practice stems from the belief that if there are no physical impediments in the speaking and hearing mechanisms, and if the individual is of normal intelligence, we can realistically expect that the individual will acquire acceptable speech and listening habits. The fact is, however, that there are large numbers of persons with properly functioning speaking and hearing mechanisms and with "normal" intelligence who are very ineffective in expressing their ideas or in understanding the ideas of others when presented through the spoken word.

From the various studies and experiments to determine why certain individuals are more effective in expressing their ideas and in understanding and remembering the ideas of others, we now know that there are specific techniques which, if mastered and used, can enhance one's speaking and listening effectiveness. We also know that these techniques can be taught. Correspondingly, our educational institutions appropriately could provide the settings in which students could acquire the skills with which their speaking and listening effectiveness could be improved.

The Committee believes that the teaching of speech and listening should commence in the elementary grades and that courses in these areas should be available throughout the secondary and collegiate levels for those who may have a need to continue to improve their effectiveness in these areas. Further, it believes that the range of offerings in speech and listening should be sufficiently broad to cover each of the major types of speaking and listening situations in which individuals may find themselves - e.g., job interviews, formal and informal discussions and classroom lectures.

The observations and recommendations appearing in this report are based on the experiences of Committee members and other professionals in the speech and listening fields and from information obtained from a survey of California community colleges. The speech/listening survey form was designed to ascertain the scope of offerings, the teaching methodologies and grading procedures employed, and the degree of district and other financial support for speech/listening programs. Further, the survey sought to determine what evaluative procedures were being used to verify the effectiveness of these programs. The following information provides the survey results of the investigation into each of the above areas as well as in certain other related areas.

Survey Results

For the purposes of the survey, "basic speech/listening courses" were defined as those offerings primarily designed to develop the ability to express and understand through oral communication those ideas necessary for carrying out day-to-day functions in a variety of social situations. The survey results are reported with that definition in mind.

In general, California community colleges are providing their students with adequate opportunity to receive training in the speech and listening basic skills. Of the 92 institutions responding to the questionnaire, 87 offered courses which fell within the definition used for the survey. At least one or more of the following were taught in the courses offered by these institutions: voice and articulation, speech making, listening comprehension, discussion techniques, interpersonal communications, and job interviewing. It is interesting to note that at least 83 of the institutions provided some type of training in speech making. Only 47 colleges provided some type of training in job interviewing.

In almost all instances, community colleges do not require speech and listening placement tests at their institutions before students are allowed to register for courses. Only two of the responding institutions required prospective students to take a speech placement test before registering. No institutions required prospective students to take a listening test before registering.

With regard to the manner in which students are placed in speech courses, most of the colleges (72) indicated that student placement in speech courses takes place mainly as a result of self-placement. However, students are also placed in speech courses through counselor referral and instructor referral. In those 20 institutions in which placement tests are administered, only 5 colleges use standardized tests.

Placement of students in listening courses in those colleges which provide this type of offering takes place about equally as a result of counselor referral, instructor referral, and self-placement. In the 10 institutions in which placement tests are given, only three make use of standardized tests.

Very few colleges give diagnostic tests to measure student needs after placement has occurred. Only 4 institutions administer diagnostic tests in speech and only 8 give diagnostic tests in listening.

Only 20 of the responding institutions require a proficiency level in speech for those seeking the Associate Degree. Proficiency is determined by such means as "test score only," "course completion only", and "either test score or course completion."

Most institutions (85) use a traditional classroom approach in teaching basic speech and listening skills. A few make use of auto-tutorial, peer-tutorial or a combination of instructional methodologies. Nearly all of the colleges (79) make use of such mechanical devices as tape recorders, movie projectors, and television when teaching speech and listening. Only 24 of the institutions responding make use of an interdisciplinary approach when teaching basic speech and listening, and only 27 institutions make use of paraprofessionals (tutors, instructional aides, etc.).

In the majority of colleges (60), in-service training is provided to instructors of basic speech mainly through conference attendance. However, only 9 colleges indicated that there was a special budget for in-service training of speech and listening instructors.

Only 7 colleges reported that they had received funds other than state apportionment and local funds to help support their basic speech skills and/or basic listening skills programs. All of the respondents indicated that evaluative procedures were used to verify the effectiveness of their basic speech and listening programs. These procedures included such means as student and teacher evaluations and follow-up of students after they had completed the course. Twenty-four institutions felt that they had exemplary programs.

Observations and Recommendations

Course Offerings. California community colleges are providing a wide range of course offerings in which instruction in basic speech and listening skills takes place. It is particularly noteworthy that 77 colleges indicated that they offered one or more courses in which the skill of listening was taught. The Committee had hypothesized that very few community colleges provided any formal instruction in the area of listening. In general, then, the Committee was very pleased with the range of offerings which are available to our community college students in the speech and listening areas.

There was one exception, however, to this generally favorable picture. The survey revealed that only 47 of the responding institutions provided training in job interviewing techniques in at least one of the speech and listening courses offered in their institutions. This finding was unexpected. The Committee had assumed that providing students with skills in job interviewing through their speech and listening offerings would have been one of the primary concerns of those persons developing a curriculum in these fields. It is conceivable that many of the speech and listening departments rely on other academic departments or on the counseling and guidance departments to provide students with job interviewing techniques. At any rate, the Committee had a concern about this finding because the unique student population served by community colleges and the constantly shifting social and economic conditions suggest that colleges should provide continuous assistance to students in developing and enhancing their job interviewing techniques.

Community colleges should maintain at least the present level of offerings in oral communication and should continue to provide training in the specific skill areas of voice and articulation, speech making, listening comprehension, discussion techniques, interpersonal communications, and job interviewing techniques. Training in job interviewing techniques should be included in the curricula of those institutions which are not offering training in this area at this time.

Placement. The Committee was pleased to find that only two community colleges required prospective students to take a speech placement test before registering and that no institutions required prospective students to take a listening placement test before registering. It sees no real advantage in requiring students to take speech and listening placement tests prior to enrolling in the institution. Placement in basic speech and listening courses can be most successfully accomplished through student contact with probable instructors, counselors, and peers. Ultimately, the decision should be the student's choice.

Diagnostic Tests. California community colleges are not inclined to administer diagnostic tests on a broad scale to determine the speech and listening needs of their students. Of the institutions responding, only four used such tests to determine the speech needs of students and only eight used them to determine the listening needs. This practice could be the result of inadequate funds for mass diagnostic testing or the belief that such testing would not yield the type of information needed for an adequate diagnosis.

There should be no mass diagnostic testing for determining the speech and listening needs of students; however, a diagnostic service ought to be available to faculty and students who need this type of assistance.

Proficiency Levels. There is no consistency among community colleges with regard to requiring speech and listening proficiency levels in degree candidates before the Associate degree is granted. Only twenty of the responding institutions indicated that a speech or listening proficiency level was required. Of that number two institutions determined proficiency by "test score only," two by "test score or course completion," two by procedures other than test score or course completion, and the remainder by "course completion only."

The Committee believes that, generally, those who are pursuing certificates or Associate degrees should be expected to have achieved a certain level of proficiency in oral communication before a Certificate of Completion or an Associate degree is awarded. However, it recognizes that considerable flexibility must be allowed for persons with varying degrees of speech and hearing disorders to meet the prescribed proficiency level. Consequently, an appropriate proficiency level in oral communication is one which allows for those unique conditions which are often present in persons seeking Associate degrees. The level of proficiency required and the manner in which proficiency can be demonstrated should be left to each community college district.

Instructional Approaches. The survey revealed that almost all our community colleges use a traditional classroom approach to teaching basic speech and listening skills. Although the Committee would encourage institutions to continue to experiment with instructional approaches which might be deemed "non-traditional", it recognizes that the traditional classroom approach can be very effective and is certainly appropriate when a variety of instructional aids and devices are used.

Institutions should use that instructional approach - whether it be considered non-traditional or traditional - which is most effective in working with the particular students served by their institutions. Colleges should experiment with an interdisciplinary approach and with the use of paraprofesssionals as possbile means of enhancing basic speech and listening instruction.

Inservice Training. Speech and listening instructors need to be provided with more in-service training experiences as a means of enhancing their teaching effectiveness. Such experiences could be funded by both district and non-district funds. Colleges should make a serious effort to support additional in-service training programs designed to improve the teaching effectiveness of their faculties.

Evaluation. Colleges are using a range of acceptable means of judging the effectiveness of their speech and listening programs. However, it is worth noting that not one of the responding institutions used an external evaluation. Such an evaluation would provide a more objective evaluation than those evaluations which are carried out by persons who are directly involved in the activities of the program.

Speech and listening programs should be evaluated periodically to determine whether they are meeting the needs of the particular students served by the college. At appropriate intervals, the evaluation of the programs should be carried out by persons who are not directly involved in the activities of the program.

Visitations. There is a real advantage for instructors of speech and listening programs to make periodic visits to other colleges to see such programs in action. The opportunity to exchange ideas with professionals at other institutions could prove to be very beneficial for all of the institutions participating in such a visitation process. Therefore, speech and listening instructors should be encouraged and supported by their districts to exchange visits periodically with instructors in other colleges.

Consultants. One of the most economical and effective ways for speech and listening instructors within California community colleges to keep up-to-date on developments taking place outside of California is to make use of highly qualified consultants. In addition to sharing information on current trends and practices throughout the nation, these consultants can assist colleges in actually implementing certain of these practices which could meet the special needs of many community college students. Colleges should set aside some funds in their operating budgets to bring in such consultants, when needed, to assist the administration and faculty improve the quality of speech and listening instruction.

Speech Therapist. Many colleges do not have staff members with the specialized professional training to meet certain needs of the students who come for help. Very frequently, students with speech problems of such severity as to require a speech therapist must be sent to other agencies to have the problems treated. It is quite reasonable to expect that colleges would have at least one individual who is qualified to handle selected cases. In addition, this person could be a valuable resource for the speech department in determining those cases which will require certain services which the college is not equipped to provide. Therefore, community colleges should have at least one person on the faculty who is qualified as a speech therapist.

Summary

The teaching of speech and listening should commence in the elementary grades and continue throughout the secondary and collegiate levels. With regard to basic skills training in speech/listening at the community college level, the Committee is making the following recommendations:

1. At least the present level of offerings in oral communication should be continued and colleges not offering training in job interviewing techniques should commence to do so.

2. Placement tests in speech and listening should not be required of students before they enroll in the institution.

3. Mass diagnostic testing should not be carried out, but diagnostic services should be available for those needing such services.

4. Students seeking the Associate degree or the Certificate of Completion should be required to demonstrate proficiency in oral communication but the required level of proficiency and manner for fulfilling the requirement should be left to each community college district.

5. Colleges should experiment with various teaching methodologies to determine which method is most effective in teaching basic oral communication.

6. Colleges should provide whatever assistance possible to support in-service training programs for their basic skills faculties.

7. Evaluation of speech and listening offerings should take place periodically with the maximum amount of objectivity to determine program effectiveness.

8. College instructors of oral communication should exchange visits from time to time to keep abreast of developments in speech and listening instruction.

9. Colleges should make use of consultants, when needed, to assist them in improving the quality of instruction in oral communication.

10. Colleges should have someone on the faculty who is qualified as a speech therapist to provide certain therapeutic and diagnostic services.

Introduction and Philosophy

The increased demand for reading courses in California community colleges can best be understood in the framework of changing national and individual needs. Michael Harrington (1975) noted our changing perception of the meaning of education when he observed:

> Two generations ago, an educated person had to know some Latin and/or Greek: one generation ago a foreign language was a necessity for anyone with a pretense to culture. Now Latin and Greek are uncommon, and the foreign languages are losing ground. Do these trends reflect a decline in quality -- or a new way of defining it in relation to a different social structure? The latter is, I think, obviously the case. Indeed, if one surveys American college history, one is struck with the fact that there is a constant process of redefining quality in the 19th century.[1]

Correspondingly, reading courses offered in community colleges are definitely more popular today than they were some years ago.

Reading courses and other basic skills courses commonly taught by reading instructors were nationally popularized largely as a result of the extreme insult to our educational system when a foreign country beat us into space. Suddenly, concern for education was stimulated and alarming books such as Why Johnny Can't Read as well as scores of articles appeared, expressing concern for the reading problem in the United States.[2]

The fact that the average adult reads below the twelfth grade level has awakened the academic community to the need for reading skills. Reading courses are accepted by an increasingly large segment of our college enrollment and students are willing to consider courses with regard to their need for reading skills. The "remedial" stigma formerly associated with low reading ability has been diminished because of recognized need for and acceptance of reading skill as a necessary function in modern society.

To provide training in this crucial skill, community colleges have developed reading programs that serve the constantly changing student population. Large numbers of minorities, re-entering older women and men, retired people, part-time students, handicapped learning disabled, and working students, many of whom were formerly considered high risk or disadvantaged students, are now enrolled in community colleges. These "new" students often need training in the basic skills, one of the most crucial of which is reading.[3]

Today, a relatively small percentage of students transfer to four-year institutions, for most community college students limit themselves to a few courses, a certificate program, or courses leading to an Associate degree or occupational certificate. They have found that the open-door policy provides more educational levels than that provided by the four-year institutions or continuation high schools. The community college

has accepted the equalitarian concept and has responded with courses for all taxpayers, tailoring the reading courses to many levels of ability and experience. Both nationally and internationally, we as a nation have committed ourselves to the concept of essential education for all by supporting Article 26 of the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights which states that everyone has a right to an education.[4] Furthermore, the complexity of government and of society has increased the demand for comprehension of written material. Ballots, insurance policies, and warranties are some examples of reading requirements faced by the populace. Income tax forms require a reading level of 12th grade or better.[5] Given the fact that a national adult reading level is between the eighth and tenth grades, public support for the teaching of reading and basic skills is not surprising. Adults who graduated with a twelfth grade reading level have found their reading skill decreased because most newspapers, magazines and popular publications reading require only an eighth to tenth grade level.

Survey Results

Course Characteristics. Because reading courses, unlike those in other disciplines, have such diverse titles, classifying their course titles in this survey is inappropriate. Therefore, reading level distinctions reflect common groupings of reading students. English as a Second Language (ESL) and reading and writing combinations courses (R/W) were named by titles. Reading courses covering grade levels zero to seven (under 7), seven to eleven (7-11) and eleven and above (11+) were designated as the three levels of reading courses.

Under the Seventh Grade Level. Classes for students reading under the seventh grade level are offered in 96% of the colleges. Most colleges (96%) offer them for a full semester and 24% offer them as variable-unit courses where entry and exit times do not necessarily coincide with semesters or quarters. There are some (11%) taught as mini-courses and a few (8%) taught by quarters or by independent study. Many schools recognize reading courses as repeatable (60%) and as electives fulfilling credit for AA/AS degrees (48%), and about one-fourth of the schools use them as a prerequisite to other courses. The most popular teaching method is the lecture and laboratory combination (67%). Relatively few schools (15%) use a laboratory exclusively. A few schools (4%) attempt low level reading instruction via lecture. Most schools (86%) grant letter grades and others (78%) give credit/no credit for reading. The most popular class size for the under seventh grade level group is 21-30 students (50%), but some colleges (30%) indicate maximum class size of 31 or more, and still others (20%) have limits under 21 students.

Classes designed to meet the needs of students reading below the seventh grade level include in their content areas such skills as vocabulary (79%), comprehension (79%), phonics (77%), attitude development toward reading (74%), spelling (71%), visual perception (69%), reading and study skills (67%), listening skills (34%), writing (29%), outlining (26%), ESL (13%). Most colleges use mechanical devices such as tachistoscopes or tape recorders to promote growth in one or more of the above mentioned content areas (88%).

Seventh to Eleventh Grade Level. The class appropriate for students between the seventh and eleventh grade level is taught in slightly more colleges (98%) than is the case for the underseventh grade level (96%). Most colleges (76%) teach it as a semester course; however, both mini-courses (15%) and variable-unit courses (23%) are quite common. Some colleges (11%) offer the courses on a quarter basis and others (11%) on an independent study basis. Most colleges (66%) indicate that the course is repeatable and others (63%) accept it as an elective-fulfilling credit towards an Associate degree. About one-third of the institutions (32%) use the course as a prerequisite for other courses in the college. This course is most often taught by lecture and laboratory combination method (79%), but laboratory setting (13%) and lecture only (9%) are also used. Most colleges (82%) grant letter grades for reading courses as well as credit/no credit grades (78%). Class size in this group is most often between 21 and 31 (59%); however, a substantial number of colleges (33%) accept more than 31 students per class and a small number (7%) accept fewer than 21 as a class maximum.

Content areas in the seventh-eleventh grade levels include various areas of comprehension (100%), reading study skills (98%), vocabulary (96%), affective development (92%), listening skills (81%), speed (80%), recreational reading (79%), note-taking and outlining (75%), visual perception (70%), spelling (68%), outlining (59%), phonics (59%), writing (33%), and ESL (11%). Most colleges indicated the use of mechanical devices in reading courses (88%).

Eleventh Grade and Above. Reading courses for students reading at the eleventh grade level and above are offered by the majority of the colleges (96%). Many (64%) typically taught it as a semester course while others (16%) offered mini-courses. Variable-unit courses (14%) and quarter-length (14%) are somewhat less common. Independent study (7%) was the least used. The eleventh grade and above courses are often considered repeatable (38%) as were the under-seventh class (60%) and 7th-11th (66%) class. Most colleges (62%) grant elective credit towards an Associate degree. Few schools (9%) use this course as a prerequisite to other courses on campus. Teaching settings for the class are somewhat similar to the other reading courses with lecture/laboratory (68%) being the most common. Straight lecture (14%) and only laboratory (11%) were somewhat less common. As indicated earlier, letter grades are very commonly used (81%) with credit/no credit only slightly less popular (78%). Maximum class size for this group of students is generally above 26 (69%) with many (25%) limiting enrollment below 26 students. Many schools consider this course transferable (48%).

Courses for readers at or above the eleventh grade in reading ability are distinguished in content from other reading courses because of their emphasis on speed and comprehension. Content level in this level include: speed (92%), various areas of comprehension (89%), vocabulary (82%), reading and study skills (80%), affective development (70%), recreational reading (68%), note-taking and outlining (66%), outlining (56%), listening skills (53%), visual perception (46%), spelling (32%), phonics (27%), writing (25%) and ESL (8%).

English As A Second Language. English as a Second Language (ESL) is offered by 86% of the schools responding to the questionnaire. ESL courses are typically taught on a semester basis (80%), on a quarter basis (12%), as a mini-course (5%), as independent study (5%) and as variable-unit (8%). Forty-five percent of the colleges permit repetition of the course; and in 39% of the colleges offering it, ESL serves as an elective for the AS/AA degree. Some colleges (19%) considered it a prerequisite for other campus classes. Nine percent of the institutions consider it a transferable course, and 4% percent required it for the AA/AS degree. The teaching format in the colleges (76%) is generally lecture/laboratory but some (16%) used all lecture and others (7%) used laboratory. The maximum class size for this class averages between 21 and 30 (58%). Classes with more than 30 students are not uncommon (20%), and those with fewer than the 20 students maximum are somewhat less common (14%).

Courses for students studying English as a Second Language possess many of the same characteristics as reading classes. Course content include the following: vocabulary (74%), various areas of comprehension (65%), phonics (64%), ESL (59%), listening skills (54%), writing (45%), reading study skills (41%), visual perception (39%), recreational reading (24%), note-taking/outlining (20%), speed (19%), and outlining (14%).

Reading and Writing Combination Courses. Reading and writing combination courses are offered by forty-five percent of the colleges. Eighty-two percent offered them for a semester's length. Twenty-nine percent offered the course as repeatable; and thirty-six percent as elective credit towards an AS/AA degree. Twenty-four percent of the colleges offering it require the course as a prerequisite for other courses. Nine percent of the schools consider the course transferable and four percent require it for the AS/AA degrees. Class enrollment limitations vary between 18 and 90 students per class.

Reading/writing combination courses are distinguished from other reading and ESL courses by the inclusion of writing in the course content. Course content includes; writing (100%), vocabulary (64%), affective development (60%), reading skills (55%), outlining (44%), phonics (44%), recreational reading (40%), speed (36%), visual perception (33%) and ESL (14%).

Departmental Offerings. The survey indicated the following departments take responsibility for teaching reading courses: English (53%); Reading (23%); Learning Centers (10%); and Psychology (3%). Reading and writing combination courses are generally found in the English departments (72%) with 10% in language arts; 8% in learning centers and 6% in the reading departments. English as a Second Language is also most often part of English departments (72%), with reading departments (10%), learning centers (6%), and psychology departments (1%) less often responsible for them. Thirty-nine percent of the colleges responding to the survey indicated that they received funds (grants, etc.) in addition to state apportionment and local funds to support reading offerings.

Staffing Characteristics. Colleges are staffing their classrooms with paraprofessionals and tutors to instruct reading students more effectively. Although the ratio of students to tutors or paraprofessionals differs among colleges, eighty percent of the institutions use paraprofessionals (tutors, instructional aides, etc.). The ratio of students to aides varied from one-to-one to thirty-to-one. About one-half of the colleges indicated that all of their paraprofessionals attended in-service training workshops or seminars in reading for which no credit was given. Twenty-eight percent of the colleges responding indicated that all their paraprofessionals had completed credit courses. Fourteen percent reported that all paraprofessionals had attended workshop credit courses or seminars. Thirty percent reported that none of their paraprofessionals had attended credit courses. Nineteen percent reported that none of their paraprofessionals had attended reading workshops or seminars.

The academic preparation of reading instructors varied. Seventy-one percent of the colleges reported that all of their instructors had taken a course for credit in the instruction of reading. Twenty-seven percent indicated that part of their reading faculty had taken such a course for credit. Two schools reported that their reading instructors had had no credit coursework. Seventy-three percent indicated that all of their instructors attended non-credit workshops or seminars, and twenty-six percent reported only some of their instructors had attended non-credit seminars or workshops.

In-service training is essential if the reading instructor is to maintain expertise in the discipline. Conferences funded with released time (84%) and regularly scheduled staff meetings (54%) are the common forms of in-service training. Training sessions (29%), outside consultants (28%), and research funded with released time (20%) were somewhat less popular. Only 27% of the schools had a special in-service training budget.

Reading instructors assume various and numerous responsibilities. Many serve in placement testing. Others are responsible for determining textbook readability, a process assessing the reading level difficulty, because it is increasingly a prime factor in predicting student success in a course. Matching of student reading ability and textbook reading level should result in cost effectiveness by increasing student retention.

Because few students receive placement counseling, reading specialists and placement tests must be utilized to inform students of their chances of success. At present, only thirty-three percent of the schools require reading placement before registering. Most schools (93%) rely on diagnostic tests that are given after enrollment in their reading classes. Only fourteen percent of the schools indicate the establishment of a minimum reading proficiency for an Associate degree.

Evaluation. The procedures used in evaluating reading courses included: testing (96%), student evaluation (90%), teacher evaluation (82%), and follow-up of students after completion of the course (37%). Sixteen percent of the institutions indicated other techniques for reading course evaluation.

Observations and Recommendations

Credit. Credit should be granted for reading courses. A recent study by Devirian, Enright and Smith (1975) reported that 62% of the schools responding to a national survey grant course credit for remedial courses.[6] The trend for this support of remedial course work is gaining momentum. Students view course credit as a more important reason than individual need in course selection. A study at a community college in New York in the 1975-76 school year indicates that virtually all students thought developmental courses helpful, but 42% of them would not have signed up for them had they not received course credit. Students seem to equate "no credit" with "no worth." Most schools that do not grant credit for remedial or developmental reading courses ironically grant credit for developmental courses in speaking, writing, drawing and foreign languages.[7] The survey indicated that approximately thirty-one percent of the responding institutions in California offer reading courses without credit.

Organization. When appropriate, basic skills offerings in reading should constitute a separate department rather than be subsumed under the English or some other department. As a separate entity, a reading department would have direct control over its budget, thereby enabling department members to determine the most appropriate uses of the fiscal resources available for the department's operation. In that connection Rouche and Appel have identified the most positive climates for developmental programs as those in which a department or division leader is able to plan, coordinate, and allocate funds for instruction, counseling, and other support services needed to carry out the department's mission.[8]

Staff Development. Colleges should upgrade the reading instructors' preparedness by establishing minimum standards for community college teaching in reading and by providing for staff development. Recognition of the distinction between literature teachers and reading teachers would stimulate the offering of much needed extension courses and workshops from universities and state colleges.

Administrators of most colleges in our country have attempted to accommodate the new staffing demand in reading by assigning English department members to teach reading courses. In most cases these instructors originally were trained for the instruction of literature or writing.[9] They generally have gained their knowledge of reading instruction by attending workshops or conferences. California community college instructors of reading have a similar history of preparation for the instruction of reading although California community college instructors have been meeting this course demand for a much longer period of time than have most colleges nationally. Staff development should be encouraged and supported.

Funding. Funds should be made available for varied approaches for the teaching of reading. Remedial and developmental courses very often need to be individualized. This approach is considered by many instructors

to be the best approach for reading instruction. The backbone of the individualized approach is the "human element" afforded by a student's regular meeting with instructors and paraprofessionals.

The survey indicated that most of the California community colleges (80%) have 80% paraprofessionals as an integral part of their reading program. Money for tutoring should be made available to all students, not just those students who qualify for categorical aid. Not all students who need tutoring qualify for learning-handicapped or for EOPS tutors. The college should have budgets for paraprofessionals in basic skills that afford both reasonable pay rates and in-service training programs.

State Assistance. The Chancellor should establish a liaison facility to inform basic skills instructors of federal, state, and foundation money availability. In-service workshops for reading instructors could be encouraged by the Chancellor's Office. A list of consultants for reading programs or for other basic skill programs could be compiled and distributed to schools.

Placement Testing. Placement testing in reading should be carried out so that students can be informed of their academic achievement levels early in their collegiate careers. The testing should not be used to refuse classes to students but to help them make selection of courses on the basis of preparedness. The inability to comprehend the prescribed reading in a course is perhaps the most frequent shortcoming of a student. Failure of that student in a course is both costly for the self-image of the student and for the pocketbook of the taxpayer. Reading placement tests administered to all new students would help considerably.

A published list of the reading grade levels of the commonly-used text-books in community colleges would help students make course selections on the basis of reading level expectations. With knowledge of the approximate text reading level for a course and a student's tested reading level, he can make wiser decisions in course selection. The large numbers of students claiming misplacement in classes due to lack of reading ability could be reduced considerably.

Summary

Reading courses in California community colleges have become increasingly more popular offerings. Our changing values and needs have prompted community colleges to offer reading courses for students at several levels of proficiency. The demands of our open-door policy over the years have placed community colleges at the vanguard of the national trend toward college reading instruction. Student characteristics have changed considerably, establishing far more need for basic reading instruction than in the past.

Professional publications in reading, survey results and collective observations have established reading course characteristics, but the titles for reading courses among the colleges are not standardized to reflect course content. The course "Reading Techniques" in one college

may be designed for students at the 6th grade level of reading proficiency, while another college may design its "Reading Techniques" course content for students reading above 12th grade proficiency. Ninety-six percent of the colleges have offerings in reading at three grade level groups: below seventh, between seventh and eleventh, and eleventh and above. Both English as a Second Language and reading/writing combination courses are commonly taught by reading instructors. Several typical characteristics are (1) classes can be repeated; (2) letter grades are given; (3) diagnostic tests are used in class; (4) courses are offered on a semester basis through the English department; (5) courses are offered as elective credit for the Associate degree; and (6) lecture and laboratory settings with tutors are used. Only 34% of the colleges require a reading placement test before registering in the institution and only fourteen percent of the colleges require a reading proficiency level for the Associate degree.

Content areas for reading courses are nearly the same for the three levels of reading courses as those for ESL courses and reading/writing combination courses. The levels of difficulty in course content differ from one course to another. For example, reading courses for students at the eleventh grade and above level stress speed, while phonics is stressed in the seventh grade course and under. In addition, most colleges use mechanical devices in their reading courses.

Regarding course evaluation, instructors judge the effectiveness of their reading programs typically with tests, student evaluations of the course, and teacher evaluation of the course.

Seventy-one percent of the instructors have completed a course for credit in the teaching of reading. The most common form of in-service training is the professional conference. Eighty-four percent of the institutions claim their instructors attend such conferences at school expenses but only twenty-five percent of the schools have a special budget for in-service training. Study skills and textbook readability are determined by staff in about seventy-six percent of the colleges.

The Committee recommends:

1. That credit be granted for reading courses.

2. That basic skills in reading become a budgeted curricular entity (department), and thus be better able to coordinate reading with academic areas, student services, and off-campus services.

3. That colleges upgrade their reading instructors' preparedness by establishing standards for the teaching of reading and by providing opportunities for staff development.

4. That funds be made available for varied approaches to the teaching of reading, and that funds be made available for students other than those that qualify for categorical aid.

5. That the Chancellor's Office establish a liaison facility to inform basic skills instructors of federal, state, and foundation money availability.

6. That placement testing be implemented so that students could be informed of their academic achievement levels early in their collegiate careers.

7. That a list of reading grade levels of the commonly used textbooks in community colleges be published to help students make course selections on the basis of reading level expectations.

The time is right for community colleges to help channel public interest into basic skills, to help the public understand their competencies in basic reading skills, and to help the public realize the importance of competency in reading. An educated and responsible populace is a basic goal of California community colleges.

Footnotes

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WRITING

Introduction and Philosophy

In a media-oriented but strangely inarticulate culture, we find that one of the most important means of communication--writing--has been neglected to the point where otherwise competent people are unable to express themselves through the written word. Evidence of this lack of a truly basic skill is cause for serious concern among responsible leaders, for if the culture and institutions which make this nation unique are to continue, skill in the use of a common written language is of paramount importance.

In its deliberations on the basic skill of writing, the Committee established a definition of basic writing skills, determining that all courses leading to and resulting in the following skills are deemed "basic":

> The ability to write an expository paragraph of at least 150 words containing a topic sentence or clear controlling idea; clear organization and specific supporting details; mastery of standard, basic mechanics in grammar, punctuation and spelling; and appropriate levels of usage and diction.

This minimum proficiency would enable a literate citizenry to function more responsibly in an increasingly complex and impersonal world that relies ever more upon written symbols for information and direction.

The writing questionnaire, along with those from the other three basic skills areas, went to 106 two-year colleges, 96 of which responded. Answers showed great needs in some areas, development in others, and, overall, a real concern for the teaching of these basic skills at the community college level. This report first presents the scope of the survey with some general comments in each area surveyed;: then it makes specific recommendations or suggestions in each area, and it highlights some exemplary programs mentioned in the responses. A listing of the survey questions and the exemplary programs appear in the appendix.

Survey Results

All of the responding colleges offered courses in basic writing skills, but for the purpose of analysis, the information was divided into seven broad areas:

1) proficiency, 2) courses and their content, 3) testing programs and procedures, 4) methodology and teaching adjuncts, 5) college commitment to the programs, 6) evaluative procedures, and 7) exemplary programs.

Proficiency Level. On the question of whether or not a writing proficiency level was required for the Associate degree, 41 colleges (41%) required some proof of proficiency, while 47 (49%) indicated no proof was necessary. Eight did not reply. Of the colleges which did require proof, 45 (50%) accepted completion of a course or a test score as acceptable proof. Only one college required a writing certification and one college was considering such a procedure.

Courses and Content. While courses were listed under varying descriptions and numbers, most of the colleges (72%) indicated that they taught the specific skills listed in the questionnaire: grammar, punctuation, usage/ diction, spelling, vocabulary, paragraph writing. These answers showed a stress upon the fundamentals of language. Terms such as "basic," "remedial," and "developmental" were often used interchangeably, but the subject matter taught was fairly uniform. Several colleges listed as basic courses English as a Second Language taught to foreign students, applying the definition of a basic writing skill.

Testing Programs and Procedures. It was evident that there is no uniformity in the testing program, either at the entrance or exit level with 44 (45%) of the colleges requiring a placement test while 47 (48%) did not require any. Of the colleges giving placement tests, 59 (61%) used standard objective tests which do not require writing samples. On the other hand, 58 (60.4%) gave diagnostic tests to measure individual student needs after they were placed in basic writing courses.

Clearly, it would seem that a valid testing program, both at the entrance and exit levels would benefit the students; first, when they enter by placing them at levels commensurate with their beginning ability where they have a likelihood of success, and second, when they leave, by assuring that they will have attained a measurable degree of writing skill.

Methodology and Teaching Adjuncts. Showing a wide range of approaches to the teaching of basic writing skills, the colleges returned information showing the traditional classroom approach by far to be predominant (85.4%). However, the auto-tutorial (45%), the peer-tutorial (43%), and the mastery concept (45.8%) indicated a definite trend toward individualizing of instruction and the recognition of learning differences within a heterogeneous student population. Another significant trend was the modularizing of course material (46.9%) in which the material in a given course is divided into small units which can be taken at varying times, giving students greater flexibility in the allocation of their time.

Another significant fact was the number of learning centers: 77 (80%). However, in studying the reports of 91 colleges, the committee found that only 21 of these centers offered basic writing courses in the center; and of the 21 who offered these courses, only 12 were supervised by the English department. Other groups, which supervised the writing skills courses in the centers, included the library, the office of the dean of instruction, and the counseling office. It would seem that closer correlation between classroom instruction and learning centers would utilize equipment and personnel more effectively.

A majority of the colleges (56%), however, indicated that they used mechanical devices, such as computers, tape recorders, and cassettes as instructional aids in the basic writing skills courses. In most cases, both learning centers and mechanical devices were considered as instructional aids rather than as methods of instruction.

College Commitment to Program. On the whole, colleges showed real commitment for and concern with basic writing skills. While there were variances in the degree of support, specific staff were assigned to these areas. For example, a total of 450 full-time and 296 part-time instructors were assigned to basic writing skills, resulting in an FTE (full-time equivalent) of 486 for the 82 colleges responding to this question. This averages a 5.93 FTE in basic skills teaching for each college.

On the other hand, enrollment in the basic writing courses or in those classes leading to the minimum proficiency as defined earlier, totalled 70,000 at the fourth census week in the fall of 1977. This averages 144 students per FTE or about 36 students per class. However, 67 (69%) of the colleges reported the use of paraprofessionals (tutors, instructional aids, ect.) in the teaching of basic writing skills classes, indicating a degree of support beyond the assignment of a classroom instructor. No extra instructional support was given by 28%, and 2% did not reply.

From the foregoing information, an assumption can be made that, while all the colleges recognize the need for basic writing skills programs, the ratio of students to instructor seems inordinately high. On the other hand, attempts are obviously being made to aid instruction by including supplementary classroom support, such as learning centers, mechanical devices, and paraprofessional use.

In the area of funding, other than regular state apportionment and local funds, only 14 (14%) indicated that they allocated special funds for basic writing skills, while 79 (82%) had no special funds, and 3 (3%) did not reply.

College Commitment to Staff Development. In the area of staff development, no significant program or funding has been allocated. Fifty-one (53%) indicated additional training through regularly scheduled staff meetings; 21% invited outside consultants; 66% allowed funded/released time attendance at conferences; 20% allowed funded/released time for research; and 19% had other training programs, such as work sessions on or off campus on the instructors' personal time and expense, visits to other colleges and programs, auditing of classes of experienced teachers by new instructors.

Very little budgetary support for in-service training of teachers was reported with 7 (7%) indicating funding, while 84 (87%) did not allocate funds. College commitment to the basic writing skills program and to more specific staff development, while certainly indicating support and concern, as a whole, nevertheless showed uneven support of this critical program.

Evaluative Procedures. A key measure of effectiveness of any program is a valid evaluation process. Colleges were questioned about the procedures used to verify effectiveness of their basic writing skills programs and these were the results: 61 (63%) indicated testing alone; 69 (71%) indicated student evaluation of the course; 72 (75%) indicated teacher evaluation of the course; 36 (37%) indicated follow-up of students; and 16% had other means, such as evaluation of final examinations, or success in subsequent freshmen composition classes on the same campus.

Clearly, a more substantive evaluative process would bring about a better understanding of the effectiveness of the program and would assist in improving the instructional program where necessary.

Some Exemplary Programs. Answers from the 27 (28%) colleges which listed what they considered exemplary programs ranged from the use of auto-tutorial, learning centers, mechanical teaching aids, and course evaluation by student instructor at one college to a Writing Center staffed with one full-time instructor, one teaching assistant, three student assistants and one secretary, offering 1-3 unit courses with stress upon personal, direct contact at another college. One institution utilized two centers--Reading and Writing. No grading system was used, and students were tested and then obtained individual study plans based on their needs. The work was reviewed constantly to re-evaluate needs, and the work plan was adjusted accordingly. When the student completed a study plan, he received a "C" competent grade. At the end of each quarter, the study contract was reviewed and credit issued accordingly. Two sections of 35 students each were served by two instructors, one aide, one clerk; mechanical aids were shared by the two sections. The study set-up involved two formal class sessions, programmed work, small group sessions, weekly lectures and discussions.

Most exemplary programs emphasized the individualized approach to teaching with testing as a means of assessing these individual needs. However, one college offered an open-entry, self-pacing, and self-screening approach with exit from courses allowed only after the student demonstrated proficiency. An interesting feature was an "In-Progress" grade for students who do not finish in one semester and who may continue the next semester without penalty.

The examples of outstanding programs showed that the colleges used a great amount of flexibility in addressing specific problems and needs in their community utilizing various methods of teaching.

The results of the survey show that basic skills programs, of which writing is only a part, deserve attention and action if the community colleges are to provide the services needed by the large numbers of students deficient in these basic skills.

Observations and Recommendations

Based upon the information from the seven broad areas of concern--proficiency, course and content, testing methodology, college commitment, evaluation, and exemplary programs--the Committee developed the following recommendations.

Proficiency Level. Since fewer than 50% of the colleges responding required a minimum writing proficiency for specific degrees and programs, the Committee recommends that each college consider adopting its own proficiency testing program. The Committee also recommends that a statewide minimum level of proficiency in writing skills be established. This level could be based upon the proficiency level defined in the following section.

Course Credit. The basic writing skills course as defined in the questionnaire stated that courses leading to this level of proficiency were termed basic. The definition follows:

> The ability to write an expository paragraph of at least 150 words containing a topic sentence or clear controlling idea; clear organization and specific supporting details; mastery of standard, basic mechanics in grammar, punctuation, and spelling; and appropriate levels of usage and diction.

Credit for specific basic skills courses acceptable for the Associate degree requirement should be left to the discretion of the individual college. Credit for the Associate degree should be granted only after the writing proficiency as defined above has been demonstrated. This proficiency requirement could be met by the student in two ways: 1) by passing an identified program, or 2) by passing a proficiency test.

If baccalaureate credit is granted for work on the level of the Subject A (the basic course required for those failing the Subject A examination at the University of California) either by the University or by the State University and Colleges, then transfer credit for that same level of work should be considered by the community colleges according to articulation agreements between the two-year and four-year institutions.

Course Content. The Committee further recommends that the content of the courses contain the minimum requirements in mechanics and structure as defined earlier.

Because of the importance of basic writing skills throughout life, all students, whether short-term or certificate-oriented, should be strongly encouraged to take an English course which includes instruction leading at least to the level of skill defined. Transfer students also should be encouraged to take these courses if they are unprepared for regular college-level English courses. Also, because writing is a skill which needs reinforcement, the Committee recommends that frequent writing exercises be a part of all basic writing courses.

Student Placement. Basic skills courses have been instrumental in helping otherwise unprepared students to complete successfully their college work. In order to ensure this positive gain and to help retention of students in classes, it is important that they be placed at an entry level where they are most likely to succeed. A diagnostic testing procedure can be used to reduce attrition which results when students find themselves at levels beyond their present competence. Also involved are the tremendous losses in the time of instructors and of resources when students do not complete their work.

The Committee recommends that each college establish a system to ensure proper advisement and counseling to students for registration in writing classes.

The Committee also recommends that an English placement test be given to all students prior to their placement in freshman composition classes, generally known as English 1A. They recognize the fact, however, that other means for student placement may be preferable at particular colleges with special conditions.

Since accurate and fair diagnostic testing requires writing samples, which in turn should be read by teams of professional readers, such diagnostic testing should be funded by the state.

Teaching Methodology. While various methods of teaching were employed in the colleges, the Committee detected a definite trend toward individualized instruction with 69% of the colleges using paraprofessionals as part of the instructional program. Also of significance was the large number of learning centers (77 or 80%).

In recognition of this trend, the Committee recommends that colleges continue the use of and support of paraprofessional aid; and that, further, colleges take advantage of the provisions of SB 941 which allows for instruction in certain situations without the presence of a certificated instructor.

Because students who need basic skills instruction are often discouraged and uncertain of themselves, the Committee recommends small groups and a one-to-one teaching relationship between student and instructor whenever possible.

Learning Centers. Learning centers are necessary and effective when used to complement and reinforce classroom instruction. When they are separate and lack articulation with classroom instruction, they lose effectiveness. The Committee recommends, therefore, that learning centers programs be coordinated to become an integral part and extension of classroom instruction.

Staff Development. Because the teaching of basic skills is a highly specialized field, the Committee stresses the need for special training and endorses the concept of staff development and recommends that:

1. Funding be made available through the Chancellor's Office for grants to explore the teaching of basic writing skills and grants for research in the area of teaching writing. In addition, the information regarding the results of such grants be given the widest possible dissemination.

2. Local, state, and federal funding be made available for reassigned time for staff development.

3. Community colleges take active part in the writing laboratories and workshops already established, e.g., the California Writing Project, the Bay Area Writing Project, and the Regional Association of East Bay Colleges and Universities.

The Committee makes these recommendations in view of the statistics of the survey which showed only 7% of the colleges allocated any funds for staff development and that only 14% had any kind of special funding for basic writing skills programs other than those funded by regular state and local apportionments.

Evaluation. The committee believes that follow-up of students in basic skills is the best means of effective evaluation of programs; yet, the survey shows that it is the least common form and the most difficult to implement. The Committee recommends state resources to support student follow-up in studies of this kind. Of the colleges questioned, only 37% indicated any follow-up of student achievement.

The Committee, furthermore, recommends that evaluation of the writing program be considered a continuing process.

Exemplary Programs. The Committee recommends that wherever possible, information about exemplary programs be disseminated so that they may be adapted to other locations and situations. A list of the colleges with programs which they deem exemplary, together with a short annotation of their work, is included in the Appendix.

Responsibility for Teaching Basic Writing Skills. The teaching of effective written communication should be the responsibility of all academic departments and not just that of the English department. The Committee endorses the concept of interdisciplinary exchange of ideas about student writing and recommends that such endeavors be encouraged and underwritten.

Summary

Learning is a life-long process, and the individual who realizes this fact will live a rich, personal life, able to make thoughtful and balanced decisions as a contributing member of society. But learning is predicated on the mastery of certain fundamental skills: reading, speaking/listening, computation, and writing. One of the Committee's concerns is that the community colleges should provide effective instruction in a crucial skill--the ability to write clearly as a means of communication. We, therefore, make the following recommendations:

Proficiency Levels and Course Credits

1. That a state-wide minimum level of proficiency in writing skills be established in accordance with the following definition of basic writing skills:

   The ability to write an expository paragraph of at least 150 words containing a topic sentence or clear controlling idea; clear organization and specific supporting details; mastery of standard, basic mechanics in grammar, punctuation, and spelling; and appropriate usage and diction.

2. That credit be granted for the Associate degree after competency in writing (at least on the level defined above) has been demonstrated, either through course completion or by proficiency testing.

3. That transfer credit be granted for work on the level of the Subject A courses of the University of California according to articulation agreements between the two- and four-year segments, if baccalaureate credit is granted for this level of work by the University of California and/or the California State University and Colleges.

4. That strong encouragement be given to all students to take English instruction to achieve at least the minimum proficiency in writing.

Course Content

1. That specific mechanical skills be taught in basic writing courses.

2. That frequent writing exercises be part of all basic English courses.

Diagnostic Testing

1. That college-wide diagnostic testing programs which include a writing sample be funded by the state.

2. That appropriate classes be made available to students in accordance with their performance on entry diagnostic tests.

3. That each college establish a system of proper advisement and counseling to students enrolling in English classes.

Methodology and Teaching Adjuncts

1. That learning centers be coordinated as an integral extension of classroom instruction.

2. That the use of paraprofessionals be encouraged and continued.

3. That whenever possible, instructors use the small group, individualized, or one-to-one approach in teaching basic writing skills.

Staff Development

1. That grants for staff development in the teaching of writing skills be funded through the Chancellor's Office.

2. That local, state, and federal funding be provided for reassigned time for staff development.

3. That the state provide funds for participation of the community colleges in laboratories and workshops established for improvement in the teaching of writing.

Evaluation of Program

1. That state resources be made available to enable colleges to make follow-up studies of students who have taken the basic English courses.

2. That evaluation of the writing program be a continuing process.

Responsibility for Writing

1. That the teaching of and requirement for effective writing be considered the responsibility of all disciplines.

2. That college-wide interdisciplinary exchange of ideas about student writing be encouraged and underwritten.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Specific Conclusions and Recommendations

Major Issues. The Committee gave attention to six major issues related to basic skills instruction which are being broadly discussed at this time.

1. Do community colleges have a responsibility to offer basic skills instruction?

2. What priority should the teaching of basic skills be given?

3. Should credit be given for basic skills courses?

4. Are present staff development programs in California community colleges adequate to provide community college instructors with the techniques and knowledge necessary for them to become even more effective in their basic skills instruction?

5. Is appropriate evaluation of basic skills programs taking place?

6. Should students receiving Associate degrees and Certificates of Completion be required to demonstrate proficiency in basic skills?

As a result of its deliberations, the Committee took the following positions:

1. Community Colleges have a responsibility to offer basic skills courses.

2. Basic skills instruction must be placed among the highest priorities of the institution.

3. Some kind of credit for basic skills courses should be given.

4. There is a definite need for more staff development programs for basic skills instructors.

5. Although some evaluation of basic skills is taking place, that evaluation should be expanded to include more objective methods so that a truer indication of the effectiveness of the instruction can be ascertained.

6. The Committee has not completed its deliberations on proficiency requirements in each of the four basic skills areas. Its recommendation will be made to the Chancellor during the next several months and will be reflected in the second document of this two-part report.

Computation. Three major facts emerged from the computation survey results:

1. Colleges are not consistent in their approach to the initial assessment and advising of students.

2. Offerings in basic mathematics skills instruction are both extensive and diverse.

3. There exists an extensive commitment to developing computational skills within community colleges.

Based upon the survey results and the deliberation of the Committee the following major recommendations were made:

1. Greater use should be made of mastery learning examinations in assessing students' proficiency levels.

2. A variety of instructional formats should be made available to enable students to learn through those methods which are most in harmony with their learning styles.

3. Special funding should be made available for retraining of present instructors as a means of developing more specialists in the teaching of computation.

4. The evaluation of basic computation skills programs should include a follow-up of students to assess the students' application of the skills in other coursework or in an occupation.

Speech/Listening. Several major findings came from the survey of basic speech/listening offerings:

1. In general, community colleges are providing their students with adequate opportunity to receive training in the speech and listening basic skills.

2. Placement in speech courses takes place mainly as a result of self-placement.

3. Placement in listening courses takes place about equally as a result of counselor referral, instructor referral, and self-placement.

4. Few colleges give diagnostic tests to measure student needs after placement has occurred.

5. Less than one-fifth of the colleges require a proficiency level in speech for those seeking the Associate degree.

6. Most colleges use a traditional classroom approach in teaching basic speech and listening skills.

7. Few colleges receive funds other than state apportionment and local funds to help support their basic speech skills and/or basic listening skills programs.

Based upon the survey results and the deliberations of the Committee, the following major recommendations were made:

1. The present level of offerings in oral communication should continue and training in job interviewing techniques should be included in the curriculums of institutions which are not offering training in this area.

2. Students should not be required to take a speech and listening placement test before enrolling in the institution.

3. There should be no mass diagnostic testing for determining the speech and listening needs of students; however, a diagnostic service ought to be available to faculty and students who need this type of assistance.

4. A required proficiency level in oral communication should be established.

5. Institutions should use that instructional approach - whether it be considered traditional or non-traditional - which is most effective in working with the particular students served by their institutions.

6. More in-service training experiences should be provided to speech and listening instructors.

7. Speech and listening programs should be evaluated periodically.

8. On-site visits among speech and listening instructors should be encouraged and supported by community colleges.

9. Consultants should be used, when needed, to assist the administration and faculty improve the quality of speech and listening instruction.

10. Community colleges should have at least one person on the faculty who is qualified as a speech therapist.

Reading. The following were among the facts obtained from the survey on basic reading skills instruction:

1. Community colleges offer a wide range of reading courses designed for persons reading at the elementary, secondary, and collegiate grade levels.

2. English as a second language is offered by the majority of community colleges.

3. Reading and writing combination courses are offered by slightly less than half of the reporting institutions.

4. Approximately 80% of the colleges use paraprofessionals to assist in teaching reading.

Based upon the survey results and the deliberations of the Committee, the following major recommendations were made:

1. Credit should be granted for reading courses.

2. Colleges should establish standards for the teaching of reading and provide more opportunities for staff development.

3. State funds should be made available to support varied approaches to the teaching of reading.

4. The Chancellor's Office should establish a liaison facility to inform basic skills instructors of federal, state, and foundation money availability.

5. Placement testing should be implemented so that students can be informed of their academic achievement levels early in their collegiate careers.

6. Evaluation procedures should entail greater use of student follow-up for determining program effectiveness.

Writing. The following were among the facts obtained from the survey on basic writing skills instruction:

1. All of the responding colleges offered courses in basic writing skills.

2. Nearly half of the responding colleges required a writing proficiency level for the Associate degree.

3. Most of the colleges taught the skills of grammar, punctuation, usage/diction, spelling, vocabulary and paragraph writing.

4. There is no uniformity among colleges in their placement testing programs.

5. The traditional classroom approach was used by a majority of the institutions.

6. Most colleges made use of learning centers for teaching basic writing skills.

7. Few colleges received any funding other than regular state apportionment and local funds to support their basic writing skills program.

8. Very little budgetary support exists for in-service training of teachers.

9. The largest number of colleges used teacher evaluation and student evaluation as the major means of determining course effectiveness.

Based upon the survey results and the deliberations of the Committee, the following major recommendations were made:

1. A statewide minimum level of proficiency in writing skills should be established.

2. Credit should be granted toward the Associate degree when competency in writing has been demonstrated, either through course completion or by proficiency testing.

3. Diagnostic testing programs which include a writing sample should be supported by state funds.

4. Each college should establish a system of proper advisement and counseling to students enrolling in English classes.

5. The use of paraprofessionals should be encouraged and continued whenever possible.

6. Grants for staff development in the teaching of writing skills should be provided through the Chancellor's Office.

7. State resources should be made available to enable colleges to carry out follow-up studies of students who have taken basic English courses.

8. Evaluation of writing programs should be a continuing process.

9. The teaching of effective writing should be considered by colleges as the responsibility of all disciplines.

General Conclusions and Recommendations

The reports on the four subject areas describe in detail the efforts of the California community colleges in Basic Skill instruction. Some general patterns clearly emerge. Typically, students may select from several levels and types of instruction at any community college. Placement in basic skills classes is more often by student choice, by instructor, or counselor referral than through organized testing. Even where testing exists, there is no uniformity. For example, approximately 46% of the reporting colleges require an English skills placement examination, with only 38% of those requiring a writing sample from students. Only 34% of the colleges reporting require a reading placement examination, and the percentage drops to 28% requiring a computation placement examination.

When one examines the exit requirements, i.e., conditions required for the Associate degree, many of the colleges have reported a formal basic skill proficiency level requisite. When such an exit requirement exists, often the completion of a course from a group of courses can be used instead of a score on a proficiency test.

Instruction in all of the basic skill areas is available at all of the reporting colleges. Seventy-two percent of those teaching basic skills in reading have completed at least one course in the teaching of reading, and there appears to be a "mini" trend toward the development of specialists in the teaching of basic writing and speech. The mathematics community talks about the need for basic skill specialists; but such mathematics instructors who might be considered specialists are, in the large, self-taught, or have had contact with K-6 teacher training programs.

If the resources available to train faculty specializing in basic skills appear limited, those available to in-service the general faculty about the problems which develop in their classroom related to students' weak basic skills are nonexistent. Twenty-five percent of the reporting colleges indicated that they have an in-service budget related to reading skills. Seven percent or less of the colleges provided any in-service budget for writing, speech, or computation.

The survey results and the deliberations of the Committee have brought to light some additional conclusions about basic skills instruction. The fact that all of the reporting colleges are involved with basic skills courses demonstrates the interest in this instruction. Apparently, colleges are appropriate places to provide this type of instruction.

The kinds of basic skills instruction provided by the colleges appear to be of three distinct types. In the first type, the course is designed to repair or refresh a skill that has been lost through the passage of time or the lack of use. In the second type, the traditional remedial function, a student who is capable in most skill areas is in need of improvement of a weak academic skill. A typical example here would be providing UC's English A for a student who can meet the other UC entrance requirements. The third type of basic skill instruction involves the need to build a skill inventory in a student who is weak but potentially able in essentially all academic areas.

Five major activities related to basic skills instruction need to be considered. These are Identification, Assessment, Instruction, Reinforcement, and Follow-up. Identification speaks to the need to identify students whose academic problems stem from weakness in one or more basic skill areas. There is a definite need for staff training in this area. Well-trained, but subject-matter oriented faculty need additional training in recognizing students with basic reading, writing, speech/listening or computational problems. Assessment refers to the careful evaluation of a student's individual skill levels and learning style. Without systematic assessment, the chances for successful improvement are greatly reduced. The "open door" demands that the community colleges should pursue an aggressive policy of student skill assessment. This is especially true of students in need of basic skills instruction. Once a student has indicated a desire to attend a community college, skill and learning style assessment provide the first step in helping select realistic goals and educational objectives.

In addition, it is the conclusion of the Committee that there is a need for careful evaluation of student learning styles as a component of the assessment process. The community colleges have identified and responded to a wide variation in the way their students learn. The survey results indicate that most colleges provide more than one instructional format in every basic skill.

Instruction refers to the actual work necessary to improve the student's weak basic skill. As mentioned above, almost all of the colleges offer a number of different instructional formats. This reflects the need for matching students with a format. In addition, most of the colleges have found that paraprofessionals provide valuable support to the core instruction. The growth in the number of specialists trained to teach reading skills to adults has improved the effectiveness of the college's reading programs. It is reasonable to conclude that encouragement of regular faculty to develop specialized skills in teaching other basic skills would represent an excellent long-term investment.

The remaining two concepts, Reinforcement and Follow-up are by common agreement weak links in the chain of skill development.

With the exception of reading, students are provided with few chances for Reinforcement of skills once developed. Many colleges report success with improving students' skills in all of the areas. Students have, however, little opportunity to use and extend those skills in other courses. The Committee does not ascribe to the "once you learn to ride a bicycle" theory of learning which states that once you learn bicycle riding, that skill is never lost. Basic skills must be used to be retained. If skills are not used in other settings appropriate to student experiences, they will be lost. At that point one should question if they are indeed "basic" survival skills.

Follow-up speaks to some of the same issues as Reinforcement. The Committee believes that students should be traced in their subsequent experiences both within the colleges and after they leave a formal learning setting in order to estimate and evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of the instructional program.

Educational Roles. Educational roles are defined by design, tradition and necessity. By all three means, community colleges have found themselves deeply involved with basic skills instruction. Basic skills instruction is a key element if community colleges are to meet their well-defined role in vocational and transfer education.

Beyond this task, community colleges have traditionally had a remedial role. Students planning four-year collegiate programs have always looked to the community college as a place to make up missing requirements. The ever-broadening nature of our student populations identify the necessity of the colleges maintaining basic skills restart programs.

It is the recommendation of the Committee that the Board of Governors reaffirm the comprehensive role of community colleges including the provision of basic skills instruction to their students.

Legal Status. As indicated above, the Committee believes that all three types of basic skills objectives described are and will continue to be concerns of community colleges. The functions described as repair or remedial have long been tasks of the colleges. The restart function is an inescapable one which the nature of our student body requires. Many students who are admitted to our colleges need this fundamental instruction before they can make use of the rest of the college program. The Committee believes that this function is well within the scope of the community colleges as outlined in current legislation, but would recommend that the Education Code be modified to remove any questions about the authorization for community colleges to provide these types of offerings.

It is recommended that the Board of Governors support the modification of Education Code Section 78201 to assure community colleges are authorized to offer any instruction which would fit the needs of students who are eligible for admission. This is to include basic skill instruction.

Funding. In California and elsewhere major political trends appear to fall into two directions. In the first, a group or movement arises with the political influence to assign a public agency the task of reaching a specific goal. Typically, this assignment speaks only to an end and not to the resources needed to meet that end. The second kind of movement is of the Proposition 13 type. The issue is not the task assigned to government, but only a limitation of the "costs." One would expect that a reconciliation between these two directions would be accomplished by elected public officials. However, commonly it falls to the agency involved to determine priorities - priorities which, in fact, should be a matter of public discussion and policy. On the one hand the agency is given a new task; and on the other hand, it is required to live with reduced resources.

It is recognized by the Committee that task and funding cannot be separated. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the Committee that future funding consideration for community colleges must make appropriate provisions for funding basic skills instruction, and its necessary assessment, support and follow-up functions.

Instruction. The areas related directly to Identification, Assessment, Instruction, Reinforcement and Follow-up have specific needs which must be addressed:

- Identification

  It is the recommendation of the Committee that the Board of Governors assist the colleges in the development of in-service training programs to help faculty, counselors, and staff to assist students in identifying their need for basic skills instruction through the establishment of appropriate staff support in the Chancellor's Office.

° Assessment

It is realistic to assume that a systematic assessment of a student's skill level and instructional needs will produce more effective advising and student placement. It is not an unreasonable expectation that more effective assessment should produce an improvement in student retention rates.

It is the recommendation of the Committee that the Board of Governors view the systematic assessment of a student's basic skill level and learning style as a critical first step in the college's basic skill instruction efforts. The Committee suggests that a first step in this direction would be that projects directed toward improved assessment funded through such sources as AB 1173 be given high priority.

° Instruction

It is the recommendation of the Committee that the Board of Goverors support the position that funding should be adjusted to realistically reflect cost differences of the various available instructional formats.

° Reinforcement

The course approval process in most of the California community colleges include the evaluation of new courses as to a number of "outside" factors such as cost, staffing, cultural awareness and so forth.

It is the recommendation of the Committee to the colleges that their formal course approval procedures include consideration of how new courses can contribute to the reinforcement of basic skills once acquired..

° Follow-up/Evaluation

Without formal follow-up and program evaluation there are serious questions raised about the commitment of resources to any instruction, including and especially basic skills instruction. If the sole evaluation of a program rests on the students' performance on an "end of course" examination, it would not be unreasonable to inquire about the appropriateness, or even the need for the mastery of the material.

The Committee recommends to the colleges that on-going formal programs be encouraged to establish:

1) *The appropriateness of the skills being developed. This includes the need for the skill in the students' formal education goals, and the need for the skill as related to the students' functioning in society; and,*

2) *The effectiveness of the instruction being provided.*

Credit and Funding. The Committee did view with alarm the notion held by some persons that the funding question and the credit/non-credit issue are somehow the same. It takes the position that to give credit or not to give credit should be determined by the nature and purpose of the curricular offering. Funding must relate to the task assigned. Detailed discussions on both credit/non-credit and funding are included in the body of this report.

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY

Basic Skills Courses: Courses designed to enable students to function effectively in a complex society and to make satisfactory progress in academic/occupational courses.

The following specific basic skills definitions by subject area were employed in the respective subject area surveys:

Basic English writing courses are those primarily designed to develop the following skills: the ability to write an expository paragraph of at least 150 words containing a topic sentence, clear organization, and specific supporting details; the mastery of standard, basic mechanics, such as grammar, punctuation, and spelling; and knowledge of appropriate levels of usage and diction.

Basic mathematics courses are those primarily designed to develop the following: the ability to select and use the appropriate procedures needed for the operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of positive whole numbers, fractions, decimal fractions, and percents. Application of these calculation skills should include the ability to make estimations and to use units of measurement, both English and metric.

Basic reading courses are those which address the improvement of reading skills at a grade level necessary to function in modern society.

Basic speech/listening courses are those primarily designed to develop the ability to express and understand through oral communication those ideas necessary for carrying out day-to-day functions in a variety of social situations.

Categorical Aid: Specified funding such as VEA (Vocational Education Act), handicapped, etc.

Criterion Referenced Tests: Tests designed to measure specific skills rather than rank students.

Developmental Courses: Courses designed to give attention to the fullest development of the student's talent, to correct weaknesses and to develop strengths.

GLOSSARY (continued)

Instructional Formats:	Various instructional methods such as traditional lecture, self-paced, modular approach, open-entry/exit, variable unit, tutoring/paraprofessional assistance, mastery learning, etc.
Learning Style:	The mean(s) by which students learn.
Mastery Learning:	An instructional strategy in which students work toward specific skill mastery rather than achievement levels being required in a specific time.
Modular Courses:	Courses in which the material in the given course is divided into smaller units which can be taken at varying times.
Normative Tests:	Tests designed to rank students against each other.
Open-Entry/Exit:	Enrollment in/exit from courses without reference to a specified time frame (i.e., semester, quarter).
Proficiency Assessment:	Activities conducted to assess a student's achievement as an indicator of knowledge or skill in a subject, such as diagnostic testing, advisement, etc.
Proficiency Level:	Demonstration of a student's achievement at a prescribed level.
Remedial Courses:	Courses designed to prepare the student to function effectively and to assure success in those programs/courses which reflect the student's planned goals. Remedial courses include a wide spectrum of courses from basic learning skills to remediating specific prerequisite skills.
Self-Paced:	The rate of progress through a specific course as determined by the student in consultation with an instructor.
Variable Unit Credit:	The amount of credit earned as the student progresses satisfactorily to complete specific course objectives.

APPENDIX B

The following program descriptions have been submitted by colleges who feel that they have exemplary programs in writing.

COLLEGE OR COLLEGE DISTRICT	PROGRAM ELEMENTS
College of the Canyons	Auto-tutorial; traditional classrooms; Learning Center; mechanical teaching aids; course evaluation by student and instructor.
Cerritos Community College	Placement testing; students write diagnostic paragraph, results of which implement placement; large classes are taught with reader and teacher's aide and therefore not burdensome; "B" or higher passes student to next level; "C" or "D" sends him to a class in which he gets individual attention.
Lassen College	Open-entry, self-pacing, self-screening. Exit upon demonstrated proficiency. Instructor supplemented with peer tutors, individualized instruction without isolation. "In Progress" feature in which student not finishing may continue the next semester. All staff teach program. "Service Course," students encouraged to submit papers assigned in other courses for writing credit.
Cabrillo College	Utilizes Writing Center staffed with one full-time instructor, one teaching assistant, three student assistants, and one secretary. Offers 1-3 unit courses with stress on personal, direct contact with student. Emphasis on individual tutoring; no mechanical devices. Work plan developed weekly by Director of Writing Center.
Chabot College Valley Campus	Utilizes two Centers; Reading, and Writing. No grading system. Student tested and obtains individual study plan based on needs as indicated by test; work reviewed constantly to re-evaluate needs and work plan adjusted accordingly. When completed, student's individual study plan receives "C" Competent Grade. At the end of each quarter, study contract reviewed and credit issued accordingly. 35 students assigned to each of two sections with two instructors, one aide, one clerk, mechanical aides shared by the two sections. Study set-up involves two formal class sessions, programmed work, small group sessions, weekly lectures and discussions.

COLLEGE OR COLLEGE DISTRICT	PROGRAM ELEMENTS
Mira Costa College	Writing workship in two parts, lecture and lab. Competency based; attendance mandatory at both lab and lecture; must complete 85% or better of assigned work; student tutoring available and encouraged. Instruction in grammar, usage, and writing conventions.
Chabot College Hayward	Student orientation pamphlet distributed; designed to allow individualized sequence of concepts and writing assignments. No letter grade is given, only Credit/No Credit. Credit incentive plan offered; more work, more credit. Study plan drawn on students diagnostic test and made available at Clerk's counter during students' scheduled hour to consult for testing or evaluate writing assignment. 10 units offered with 4 being mandatory and others mandatory as need is indicated by diagnostic test. Tests may be retaken and papers rewritten as necessary. 25 qualified tutors available per class (90). Group discussions or counseling available; tapes and sample test available. Clerk also on duty.
El Camino College	Utilizes a Writing Center supported with tutors and a composition mastery series. Center is manned with three specialists with degrees in English, and one instructor. These persons confer with the students on an individual basis. This program newly implemented and results are being researched with conclusions pending.
Compton College	Developmental English Program offered in modules. Initial module depends on entry proficiency level. Passing grade on Mastery test required before advancement to next module or receipt of credit. Tutoring is available in the Learning Center.
College of the Desert	Utilizes a writing lab as a supportive measure to classroom time. Lab has auto-tutorial equipment and peer tutoring. Basis for success is proper placement established by testing. Students may choose either traditional grading procedures or pass/not pass system.
Oxnard College	Self-instruction modules offered; student may enroll at any time; units awarded on basis of specific module chosen, time devoted, work completed, and progress made.
College of San Mateo	Writing Center and competency exams are the assets and program utilized.

COLLEGE OR COLLEGE DISTRICT	PROGRAM ELEMENTS
San Bernardino Valley College	Students must take non-transfer writing class or take Challenge exam.
Indian Valley Colleges	Reading and Writing workshop, diagnostic testing. Individualized and small group instruction utilizing programmed and auto-tutorial instructional materials, video tapes, filmstrips, controlled reading machines. Conferring with a skills instructor, each student is assigned a prescribed course of study to follow. Grades are based on improvement determined by a comparison of diagnostic beginning test against final test.
College of Marin	English tutorial program: one-to-one instruction at all levels through Tutoring Center. Language skills outreach program: assistance to students in academic departments. Teaching assistants read and evaluate papers for writing skills while teachers analyze content. Placement testing and evaluation utilized.

Appendix C

Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Basic Skills
General Questionnaire

NOTE: Please base all information on Fall 1977 first census week.

I. Name of college responding _____ Date _____

II. Name of district _____

Number of colleges in district _____

III. Person submitting information:

Name _____ Position _____

Telephone number _____

IV. College location (please check):

1. Urban _____
2. Suburban _____
3. Rural _____

V. Total enrollment (day and evening) _____

Full time (12 or more units) _____

Part time (less than 12 units) _____

VI. Total weekly student contact hours (WSCH): _____

VII. Number of instructors:

Full time _____

Part time _____

VIII. If you wish to have a copy of the results of this survey, please specify where it should be sent:

Name _____ Position _____

Address _____

Appendix D

Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Basic Skills
Questionnaire on Basic Mathematics

Name of College Responding _____ Date _____

For the purpose of this questionnaire, Basic Mathematics courses are those primarily designed to develop the following:

The ability to select and use the appropriate procedures needed for the operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of positive whole numbers, fractions, decimal fractions, and percents. Application of these calculation skills should include the ability to make estimations and to use units of measurement, both English and metric.

I. Please list your courses primarily designed to develop the basic mathematics skills defined above and complete the requested information for fall 1977:

Course # and Title	Units	Length of Course	Typical Class Size	No. of Sections Fall 1977	All Sections of Course: Total Enrolled 4th Week	All Sections of Course: Approx. Ending Enroll.
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						

II. Complete the following regarding each of the courses listed in question #I. Use a check mark (✓) to denote a "yes" answer.

Course	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
Designed for Transfer Credit					
"Letter" grade only					
Pass/Fail grade only					
"Letter" or Pass/Fail grade option					
Modular type (primarily)					
"Mastery" performance required					
Traditional instruction (primarily)					
Open laboratory instruction					
Peer tutorial					
Self-paced instruction (primarily)					
Others (please specify) _____					

III. Are all students required to take a mathematics placement test at the college before registering for courses? Yes ____ No ____

IV. If all students are not required to take a placement test in mathematics before registering for courses, how is student placement in mathematics courses determined? (Check)

_____ Counselor referral

_____ Instructor referral

_____ Self-placement

_____ Others (specify) _____

_____

_____

V. If any students are given placement tests in mathematics, are the tests standardized? Yes ____ No ____

If no, are the tests developed at your college? Yes ____ No ____

VI. If standardized tests are used, please give names and cutoff scores:

_____

_____

VII. Are diagnostic tests used to measure individual student needs after placement in a basic mathematics course? Yes ____ No ____

VIII. Is a mathematics proficiency level required for the Associate degree? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, complete the following:

Level of proficiency required _____

Proficiency determined by (check appropriate response):

_____ Test score only

_____ Course completion only

_____ Test score or course completion

_____ Other (please explain) _____

If tests score are used, give names of tests and cutoff scores:

_____

IX. Are mechanical devices (computers, etc.) used in any of your basic mathematics courses? Yes ____ No ____ If yes, please specify when and where they are used.

_____

X. Do you make use of paraprofessionals (tutors, instructional aides, etc.)? Yes ____ No ____ If yes, what is the ratio of students to this type of aide? _____

XI. What is the total number of certificated instructors assigned to basic skills courses in mathematics?

Full-time _____ Part-time _____

XII. What is the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) certificated instructors assigned to basic skills courses in mathematics? _____

XIII. What type of in-service training is provided for instructors of basic mathematics courses? (Check where applicable)

____ Regularly scheduled staff meetings

____ Outside Consultants

____ Conferences (funded/released time)

____ Research (funded/released time)

____ Training sessions

____ Others (specify) _____

_____

XIV. Is there a special budget for in-service training of mathematics instructors? Yes ____ No ____

XV. Are funds (grants, etc.) other than state apportionment and local funds used to help support your basic mathematics skills program? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, please indicate source of funds _____

_____

XVI. What evaluative procedures do you use to verify the effectiveness of your basic mathematics program? (Check each method used.)

____ testing

____ student evaluation of course

____ teacher evaluation of course

____ follow-up of students after completion of course

____ Others (specify) _____

_____

XVII. If you have exemplary programs, please describe or furnish information. (Use additional sheets as necessary.)

XVIII. Please expand upon any items which require additional clarification of your courses or programs. (Use additional sheets as necessary.)

Person Responding to Questionnaire: _____

Position: _____

Address: _____

_____

Check if you would like to receive a copy of the results of this survey. _____

Thanks for participating.

Appendix E

Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Basic Skills
Questionnaire on Basic Speech/Listening Skills

Name of College responding _____ Date _____

For the purpose of this questionnaire, basic speech/listening courses are those primarily designed to develop the ability to express and understand through oral communication those ideas necessary for carrying out day-to-day functions in a variety of social situations.

NOTE: Please base all information on fall, 1977 data.

I. Please list your basic speech and basic listening courses as defined above.

Course # and Title	Units	Length of Course	Typical Class Size	No. of Sections fall 1977	All Sections of Course: Total Enrolled 4th Week	All Sections of Course: Approx. Ending Enroll.

II. Indicate with a check mark the specific skills which are taught in one or more of the above offerings.

_____ Voice and articulation

_____ Speech making

_____ Listening comprehension

_____ Discussion techniques

_____ Interpersonal communications

_____ Job interviewing techniques

_____ Others (specify) _____

_____

_____

_____

III. Are all students required to take a speech placement test at the college before registering for courses? Yes ____ No ____

IV. Are all students required to take a listening placement test at the college before registering for courses? Yes ____ No ____

V. If all students are not required to take a placement in speech before registering for courses, how is student placement in speech courses determined?

____ Counselor referral

____ Instructor referral

____ Self-placement

____ Others (specify) _____

_____

VI. If any students are given placement tests in speech, are the tests standardized? Yes ____ No ____

If no, are the tests developed at your college? Yes ____ No ____

NOTE: If your college does not offer a course in listening, skip questions VII and VIII.

VII. If your college does offer a course in listening but does not require all students to take a placement test in listening, how is student placement determined? (Check)

____ Counselor referral

____ Instructor referral

____ Self-placement

____ Others (specify) _____

_____

VIII. If any students are given placement tests in listening, are the tests standardized? Yes ____ No ____

If no, are the tests developed at your college? Yes ____ No ____

IX. Are diagnostic tests used to measure individual student needs after placement:

In a basic speech course? Yes ____ No ____

In a basic listening course? Yes ____ No ____

X. Is a speech or listening proficiency level required for the Associate degree? Yes ____ No ____ If yes, please complete the following:

	Speech	Listening
Proficiency determined by (check appropriate response):		
Test score only	_____	_____
Course completion only	_____	_____
Test score or course completion	_____	_____
Others (please explain)		
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

If test is used, please indicate type of test (nature of test and whether it is standardized): _____

_____

XI. Which of the following instructional methodologies and grading procedures are used in your speech/listening program?

		Grading Procedure	
		Credit/No Credit	Letter Grade
_____	Traditional Classroom	_____	_____
_____	Auto-tutorial	_____	_____
_____	Peer-tutorial	_____	_____
_____	Others (specify):		
	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____

XII. Are mechanical devices (tape recorders, television, etc.) used in any of your basic speech and listening courses or speech and listening laboratories? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, please specify when and where they are used: _____

_____

_____

XIII. Is an interdisciplinary approach used in teaching basic speech and listening courses? Yes ____ No ____ If yes, please specify subjects combined:

_____

_____

XIV. Do you make use of paraprofessionals (tutors, instructional aides, etc.)? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, what is the ratio of students to this type of aide? _____

XV. What is the total number of certificated persons teaching:

In your basic speech courses? Full-time _____ Part-time _____

In your basic listening courses? Full-time _____ Part-time _____

XVI. What is the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) certificated persons teaching:

In your basic speech courses? _____

In your basic listening courses? _____

XVII. What type of in-service training is provided for instructors of basic speech courses? (Check where applicable)

_____ Regularly scheduled staff meetings

_____ Outside consultants

_____ Conferences (funded/released time)

_____ Research (funded/released time)

_____ Other (specify) _____

_____

XVIII. Is there a special budget for in-service training of speech and listening instructors? Yes ____ No ____

XIX. Are funds (grants, etc.) other than state apportionment and local funds used to help support your basic speech skills and/or your basic listening skills programs? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, please indicate source of funds: _____

_____

_____

XX. What evaluative procedures do you use to verify the effectiveness of your basic speech and listening program? Check each method used.

		Speech	Listening
_____	Testing	_____	_____
_____	Student evaluation of course	_____	_____
_____	Teacher evaluation of course	_____	_____
_____	Follow-up of students after completion of course	_____	_____
_____	Other (specify) _____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____
_____	None	_____	_____

XXI. If you have exemplary programs, please describe or funish information. (Use additional sheets as necessary.)

XXII. Please expand upon any items which require additional clarification of your courses or program. (Use additional sheets as necessary.)

Person responding to Questionnaire: _____

Position: _____

Address: _____

_____

Check if you would like to receive a copy of the results of this survey. _____

Thanks for participating.

Appendix F

Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Basic Skills
Questionnaire on Basic Reading Skills

Name of College responding _____ Date _____

Area of instruction responding _____
(Reading Dept., Language Arts Division, Learning Skills Laboratory, etc.)

For the purpose of this questionnaire, basic reading courses will be defined as those courses addressing the improvement of reading skills at a grade level necessary to function in modern society. Please report on all levels of reading development based on data from first census fall, 1977.

I. Do you offer courses which provide aid to students reading at the following grade levels? (Check each offering)

	Yes	No	Number of students enrolled in courses as of first census fall '77
ESL (English as a Second Language)	___	___	_____
Under 7	___	___	_____
Between 7 - 11	___	___	_____
11 and above	___	___	_____

II. What is the maximum number of students allowed in courses designed for the following grade levels?

	Maximum number of students allowed in class					
	5-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31+
ESL	____	____	____	____	____	____
Under 7	____	____	____	____	____	____
Between 7 - 11	____	____	____	____	____	____
11 and above	____	____	____	____	____	____

III. Do you offer combination reading and writing courses? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, indicate the number of students who were enrolled in courses as of first census fall '77 _____

IV. What is the maximum number of students allowed in the reading/writing combination course? _____

V. What are the teaching settings of your basic skills courses? (Check)

	Grade Level			
	ESL	Under 7	Between 7 - 11	11 and above
All lecture	_____	_____	_____	_____
Lecture and laboratory	_____	_____	_____	_____
Laboratory only	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other (please specify)				
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

VI. Do you make use of paraprofessionals (tutors, instructional aides, etc.)?
Yes ____ No ____

If yes, what is the ratio of students to aide in programs or courses at each of the following levels?

ESL _____; Under 7 _____; Between 7 - 11 _____; 11 and above _____

VII. What is the ratio of students to aide in reading/writing combination courses?
_____

VIII. What is the total number of certificated persons teaching in your basic reading program? Full-time _____ Part-time _____

IX. What is the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) instructors assigned to programs and courses at each of the following grade levels? (If less than one full-time equivalent instructor, please approximate percentage of time devoted to each of the following grade levels.)

ESL _____; Under 7 _____; Between 7 - 11 _____; 11 and above _____

X. What is the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) instructors assigned to reading/writing combination courses? (If less than one full-time equivalent instructor, please indicate the approximate percentage of an instructor's time devoted to reading/writing combination courses.) _____

XI. What department takes primary responsibility for each level of reading courses? (Check)

	Grade Level			
	ESL	Under 7	Between 7 - 11	11 and above
English Department	_____	_____	_____	_____
Learning Resource Center	_____	_____	_____	_____
Reading Department	_____	_____	_____	_____
Psychology Department	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other (please specify)				
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

XII. What department takes primary responsibility for reading/writing combination course? _____

XIII. What is the length of each level of reading courses? (Check)

	Grade Level			
	ESL	Under 7	Between 7 - 11	11 and above
Semester	_____	_____	_____	_____
Quarter	_____	_____	_____	_____
Mini or short course (4, 6, 8 weeks)	_____	_____	_____	_____
Independent study	_____	_____	_____	_____
Variable unit	_____	_____	_____	_____

XIV. What is the length of the reading/writing combination course? _____

XV. Please check the appropriate blanks.

A reading course in the following area	Grade Level				
	ESL	Under 7	Between 7 - 11	11 and above	Reading/writing combination
Is required for AS/AA degree	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Is a prerequisite for other courses	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
May serve as an elective for AS/AA degree	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Can be repeated	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Is considered transferable by your college	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

XVI. Are students required to take a reading placement test at the college before registering for sourses? Yes ____ No ____

XVII. Are diagnostic tests used to measure student needs after placement in a reading course? Yes ____ No ____

XVIII. Are letter grades given in reading course? Yes ____ No ____

XIX. Can credit/no credit (CR/NC) be used for courses? Yes ____ No ____

XX. Is a reading proficiency level required for the Associate degree? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, please complete the following.

Level of proficiency required _____

Proficiency determined by (check appropriate response):

- Test score only ____
- Course completion only ____
- Test score or course ____
- Other (please explain) _____

XXI. If test score is used, give name of test and cutoff score _____

_____

XXI. Please specify the content areas your reading courses cover (check):

	ESL Gr. Level	Under 7 Gr. Level	Between 7 - 11 Gr. Level	11 and above Gr. Level	Reading/writing Combination
Phonics					
Vocabulary					
Spelling					
Visual Perception					
Affective development--attitude towards reading					
Reading study skills					
Listening skills					
Note-taking outlining					
Various areas of comprehension					
Speed					
Recreational reading					
ESL					
Outlining					
Writing					

Other _____

XXII. Are mechanical devices (tachistoscopes, reading pacers, etc.) used in any of your reading courses or reading laboratories? Yes ____ No ____ If yes, please specify when and where they are being used _____

_____

XXIII. Are funds (grants, etc.) in addition to regular state apportionment and local funds used to support your reading offerings? Yes ____ No ____ If yes, please indicate the source of such funds _____

_____

XXIV. What evaluative procedures do you use to verify the effectiveness of your program? Check each method used:

_____ testing

_____ student evaluation of course

_____ teacher evaluation of course

_____ follow-up of students after completion of course

_____ other, please specify _____

_____ none

XXV. How many of the certificated instructors and instructional assistants in your reading program have completed credit courses in the teaching of reading? (Check)

	Instructors	Paraprofessionals
all	_____	_____
75% (approximately)	_____	_____
50% (approximately)	_____	_____
25% (approximately)	_____	_____
none	_____	_____

XXVI. How many of the certificated instructors and instructional assistants in your reading program have participated in reading workshops, seminars, or other activities for which they did not receive credit? (Check)

	Instructors	Paraprofessionals
all	_____	_____
75% (approximately)	_____	_____
50% (approximately)	_____	_____
25% (approximately)	_____	_____
none	_____	_____

XXVII. What type of inservice training is provided for reading instructors?

_____ Regularly scheduled staff meetings

_____ Outside consultants

_____ Conferences (funded/released time)

_____ Research (funded/released time)

_____ Training sessions

_____ Other (specify) _____

XXVIII. Is there a special budget for in-service training? Yes ____ No ____

XXIX. Do reading instructors work with materials (textbooks, syllabi, etc.) from other subject areas? Yes ____ No ____

XXX. Are these materials used for:

	Yes	No
study skills	___	___
text book readability determination	___	___

Other (please specify) _____

XXXI. Please expand upon any items which require additional clarification of your courses or program. (Use additional sheets as necessary.)

XXXII. If you feel you have an exemplary program, please describe it. (Use additional sheets as necessary.)

Person responding to questionnaire: _____

Position: _____

If you wish to have a copy of the results of this survey, please specify where it should be sent:

Address _____

_____

Thanks for participating.

Appendix G

Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Basic Skills
Questionnaire on Basic Writing Skills

NOTE: Please base all information on the First Week Census of fall 1977.

Name of college responding _____ Date _____

For the purpose of this questionnaire, Basic English Writing Courses are those primarily designed to develop the following skills: the ability to write an expository paragraph of at least 150 words containing a topic sentence, clear organization, and specific supporting details; the mastery of standard, basic mechanics, such as grammar, punctuation, and spelling; and knowledge of appropriate levels of usage and diction.

I. Please list your basic writing skills courses as defined above.

					All Sections of Courses	
Course # and Title	Units	Length of Course	Typical Class Size	No. of Sections Fall 1977	Total Enrolled 4th Week	Approx. Ending Enroll.

II. Indicate with a check mark the specific skills which are taught in one or more of the above offerings.

_____ Grammar

_____ Punctuation

_____ Usage/Diction

_____ Spelling

_____ Vocabulary

_____ Paragraph writing

_____ Other (specify) _____

_____

_____

III. Are all students required to take an English placement test at your college before registering for courses? Yes ____ No ____

IV. If all students are not required to take a placement test in English before registering for courses, how is student placement in English courses determined?

_____ Counselor referral

_____ Instructor referral

_____ Self-placement

_____ Others (specify) _____

_____

V. If any students are given placement tests in English, are the tests standardized? Yes ____ No ____

a. If standardized tests <u>are</u> used, are they of the "objective" type? Yes ____ No ____

Do they require a writing sample? Yes ____ No ____

b. If standardized tests <u>are not</u> used, are the tests which are used developed at your college? Yes ____ No ____

Are they of the "objective" type? Yes ____ No ____

Do they require a writing sample? Yes ____ No ____

VI. Are diagnostic tests used to measure individual student needs after placement in a basic writing skills course? Yes ____ No ____

VII. Is a writing proficiency level required for the Associate degree? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, please complete the following:

Proficiency determined by (check appropriate response):

_____ Test score only

_____ Course completion only

_____ Test score or course completion

_____ Others (please explain) _____

_____

_____

If test is used, please indicate type of test (check):

_____ Objective only

_____ Essay only

_____ Objective and essay

_____ Standardized test

_____ Department test

_____ Other (specify) _____

_____

VIII. Which of the following instructional methodologies and grading procedures are used in your basic writing skills program? Check all appropriate blanks.

		Grading Procedure	
		Credit/No Credit	Letter Grade
_____	Modular	_____	_____
_____	Mastery Concept	_____	_____
_____	Auto-tutorial	_____	_____
_____	Peer-tutorial	_____	_____
_____	Traditional classroom	_____	_____
_____	Others (specify)		
	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____

IX. Does your college have a Learning Center? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, is a basic writing course offered at the Center? Yes ____ No ____

a. If a basic writing skills course is offered at the Center, does the English Department supervise the course? Yes ____ No ____

b. If the English Department does not supervise the course, please designate the supervising department. _____

_____

X. Are mechanical devices (computers, tape recorders, etc.) used in any of your basic writing skills courses? Yes ____ No ____ If yes, please specify when and where they are used. _____

_____

XI. Is an interdisciplinary approach used in teaching basic writing skills courses?
Yes ____ No ____ If yes, please specify subjects combined: _____

_____

_____

XII. Do you make use of paraprofessionals (tutors, instructional aides, etc.)?
Yes ____ No ____

If yes, what is the ratio of students to this type of aide? _____

XIII. What is the total number of certificated instructors assigned to basic writing skills courses? Full-time _____ Part-time _____

XIV. What is the number of full time equivalent (FTE) certificated instructors assigned to basic writing skills courses? _____

XV. What type of in-service training is provided for instructors of basic writing skills courses? (check where applicable):

_____ Regularly scheduled staff meetings

_____ Outside consultants

_____ Conferences (funded/released time)

_____ Research (funded/released time)

_____ Other (specify) _____

_____

_____

XVI. Is there a special budget for in-service training of basic writing skills instructors?
Yes ____ No ____

XVII. Are funds (grants, etc.) other than state apportionment and local funds used to help support your basic writing skills program? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, please indicate source of funds: _____

_____

_____

XVIII. What evaluative procedures do you use to verify the effectiveness of your basic writing skills program? Check each method used.

_____ Testing

_____ Student evaluation of course

_____ Teacher evaluation of course

_____ Follow-up of students

_____ Other (please specify) _____

_____ None

XIX. If you have exemplary programs, please describe or furnish information. (Use additional sheets as necessary.)

XX. Please expand upon any items which require additional clarification of your courses or program. (Use additional sheets as necessary.)

Person Responding to Questionnaire: _____

Position: _____

Address: _____

_____

Check if you would like to receive a copy of the results of this survey. _____

Thanks for participating.

Appendix H

CHANCELLOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON BASIC SKILLS *

Royce Adams
Instructor, Reading
Santa Barbara City College

Leo P. Burke
Trustee
San Joaquin Delta CCD

Leadie Clark
Chancellor
North Orange CCD

Joan Clinton
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Ann Clutinger
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Marin CCD

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Brandon Wheeler
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Los Rios CCD

Saxon Wraith
Vice President for Student Services
Southwestern College

Earl Robinson
Instructor, Speech
Laney College

Committee Resource Persons

Ernest Berg
Associate Executive Director
Calif. Comm. & Jr. College Assn.

Stanley Rosenberry
Instructor, Reading Skills
Foothill College

Chancellor's Representative

Clarence Mangham
Administrator, Innovative Programs
California Community Colleges

* All members listed here were among those originally appointed to the Advisory Committee. Several are presently inactive due to the press of other obligations.

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